Psalm-Singers' Conference.

Belfast, August, 1902.

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Psalm-Singers' Conference,

Held in

The Y. M. C. A. Hall, Wellington Place, Belfast,

On

5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th August, 1902.

Belfast:
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Preface.

The holding of a Psalm-singers' Conference in Belfast was first suggested by the Rev. J. W. S. Lowry, Minister of the United Presbyterian Church of America at Clarinda, Iowa. After some correspondence, a meeting, to which representative men in the Psalm-singing Churches of Ireland and Scotland, and others believed to be in sympathy with the object, were invited, was called in Belfast. The meeting decided in favour of the holding of a Conference in Belfast from the 5th to the 8th of August, 1902; and various committees were appointed to make all necessary arrangements. At this meeting the question was raised whether the instrumental music question might not be discussed as well as the question of the exclusive use of the Psalms in Praise; and it was unanimously decided that the Conference should deal with the latter subject only. Two respected brethren who prepared Papers for the Conference, namely, Rev. Dr. N. M. Brown of Limavady, Ireland, and Rev. Dr. D. R. Miller of Adamsville, Ohio, U.S.A., had not, apparently, been informed with regard to this arrangement; and they both introduced the instrumental music question into their Papers, the former arguing strongly against the use of instrumental music in worship, the latter in favour of it. When Dr. Brown was made aware of the decision, he consented to the elimination of the part of his Paper dealing with that subject; but Dr. Miller, considering that such elimination in the case of his Paper would spoil his argument, refused to make the desired change, and said he would publish his Paper on his own responsibility after the publication of the Conference volume containing the other Papers. It had been also suggested to Dr. Miller that he might modify his condemnation of the Scottish metrical version of the Psalms —a version which is venerated, and, we think, deservedly venerated, by at least nine out of every ten persons who attended the Conference.

It is admitted on all hands that the Conference, which embraced representatives of most of the Psalm-singing Churches of the world, was, as far as man could judge, a marked success. The pervading feeling among its members, while the meetings were in progress and also at their close, was one of profound thankfulness to Almighty God for His great goodness in so vouchsafing His favour. The subjects, which covered a wide range, had been well chosen; the Papers read and the Addresses delivered were of a high order; the attendance of members and of the public from beginning to end was large; the interest never for a moment seemed to flag; and a deep impression was made on a wide circle as to the unchanging adaptation of the Psalms to the Service of Praise, and their incomparable superiority to all uninspired substitutes.

To the Publication Committee the editing of the volume has been very congenial work. They have been led to form even a higher estimate of a good many of the Papers than when they heard them at the Conference; and they venture to think that most of those who carefully read the volume throughout will agree with them, that while hardly any department of the Psalmody question is entirely overlooked, several of its most important aspects are more fully and satisfactorily dealt with than in any previous work on the subject.

The volume is a little later in appearing than was expected; but the delay was unavoidable. It is now sent forth with the earnest desire and hope that God will use it as a means of giving His people clearer conceptions of the transcendent excellence of His own Book of Songs, and of the duty and privilege of using it to the exclusion of all other compositions in the Ordinance of Praise.

THE EDITORS.

June, 1903.

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ERRATA.

Page 73, line 6 from top, for "1 Sam. 8, 11-14" read *1 Sam. 13, 8-14.*
Page 172, line 16 from bottom, insert comma after "seek".

TUESDAY EVENING, 5th AUGUST.

RECEPTION MEETING, from 7-30 to 10 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN:—

REV. GEORGE MAGILL, Belfast, Ireland.

A Blessing was asked by Rev. John Kinnear, D.D., Letterkenny, Ireland.

After tea Rev. George Magill took the chair.

The 100th Psalm having been sung,

Rev. Professor Dick, D.D., one of the Secretaries, announced letters of apology for non-attendance from Revs. D. K. Mitchell, John Milliken, J. Thompson, John MacDermott, Henry Montgomery, John Greenlees, A. J. Wilson, and Dr. Megaw.

The Chairman, who was received with applause, said he desired to thank his brethren for the honour of being asked to preside on that occasion. He was well aware of the circumstances which determined their choice—environment and years were the dominant factors, not any special claims or fitness upon his part. Nevertheless he would strive, as best he could, to discharge the functions of the chair, and knowing that he was amongst sympathetic friends, he would dread neither adverse nor severe criticism. The time was when a conference like that would never have been thought of, but that was when the different sections of the Presbyterian Church understood and respected the principles regulative of public worship, and were guided solely by "the law and the testimony" in all matters of faith and practice. With many, sad to say, that was now a thing of the past. Times were changed, and, with some, principles had changed with the times. Regarding the Conference itself, it would perhaps be difficult to say when and with whom the idea actually

originated, though he thought the Rev. J. W. S. Lowry, of Clarinda, Iowa, U.S.A., deserved the credit; but he was safe in saying that if Dr. Petticrew and Mr. Lowry were not the originators they were the faithful foster parents, and it is owing chiefly to their zeal and indomitable perseverance that they were there that night to vindicate the sovereignty of the Divine Psalter and declare that in their estimation it was the only Psalmody sanctioned by Scripture for the service of the sanctuary. He regarded this Conference in the light of a great object lesson—it was the outward and visible sign of two great Scriptural principles—first, that the King and Head of the Church expected from us what He had "commanded," and secondly, that He would not be offended by the absence of what He had not "required" at our hands. He (the Chairman) often wondered that these principles were not universally accepted as axiomatic by thoughtful people. They had no difficulty in producing an authority for Psalm-singing; and the appointment of an inspired Psalter as certainly excluded all other compositions from the service of the sanctuary as the selection of the tribe of Levi for the conduct of temple worship excluded every other tribe from that service. By their principles they interfered with no man's liberty: whatever limits had been assigned to freedom had been assigned by the great Lawgiver Himself. They did not charge those who rejected their principles with corrupt unchristian motives, nor declare that they were hardened heretics, whose friendship must be shunned. Nevertheless they must remember that "evil was wrought by want of thought as well as by want of heart," and that not a few had ere now made havoc of the Church while thinking they were doing God's service. But all these subjects were to be considered by the accomplished essayists who were to read papers at the Conference, and he apologised for trespassing on their special domain. He was charged to tender to them the heartiest possible greetings, and this he did in the name of the Psalm-singers of this country. They received them in their midst with feelings of admiration and regard, not only for their own sake, but also for the work's sake. It was no great wave of national rejoicing at the close of a protracted and desolating war that wafted them to their shores, though he was sure they rejoiced with them that did rejoice. They had not crossed the seas to witness a grand Coronation pageant and hear the shout, "God Save the King," though they firmly believed that the powers that be were ordained of God. They had not come to undermine old and established institutions, to cast discredit upon their martyred sires, or heap ridicule

upon the rugged grandeur of the metrical version of the inspired psalmody. They had come at great expense, as well as great personal inconvenience, to exponnd and defend the great Scriptural principles that lay at the foundation of sanctuary praise, and to avow fearlessly before all men that, after the manner which innovators called antiquated or uncultured, they worshipped the God of their fathers, believing all things that were written in the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning public worship, and that the New Testament Lawgiver would be pleased with the psalmody He had provided, and would not be offended if they withheld from His service the sentimental swellings of uninspired and fallible men. Fashion had often enticed them to follow, but she had conjured in vain. Blandishment and bribery, rancour aud ridicule had all alike proved impotent to wean them from the great principles on which their faith was founded. They were delighted by the presence of the delegates; and by way of supplementing those altogether inadequate words he would ask that magnificent audience to rise to their feet and give them a cordial and Irish "cead mille failthe."

The audience then rose and applauded loudly.

Rev. Murdo MacKenzie, Inverness, returned thanks for the cordial welcome given to the delegates from Scotland. They felt themselves at home in that meeting. There was a strong affinity between the race to which he belonged and the Irish race. Proceeding, the speaker said Christ found Himself in the Psalms, and surely Christians should find Christ in the Psalms. For thirty-two years he had been an ordained minister, and he had never used a hymn in public worship. The delegates had come there in order to receive information, and he trusted that during that great Conference they would receive it, and be the means of strengthening one another.

Rev. J. C. Milligan, D.D., New York, said the United Presbyterian Church of North America were in sympathy with them. He was specially there to represent thousands who were hymn-singers. He had sung Psalms all his life, hymns all his life, spiritual songs all his life, and all of them had been of God's own inspired Word. They had in America an inter-denominational committee consisting of delegates from Churches, who were united in a great work, and he had been requested by the committee to ask the co-operation of those present in that work. Their idea was that there were imperfections in the grand old Scotch version, and he represented between one and a half millions and two millions of Christians, who were heartily engaged in taking from the

Bible, as close as it was possible, the entire Word of God as contained in the Book of Psalms, and with no human additions except such as were absolutely necessary in bringing it into metre.

Rev. Professor Morton, Perth, thanked the meeting for the cordial welcome extended to the delegates. It was just what they would have expected coming from Scotland, because the ties between that country and the North of Ireland had always been of the most intimate and cordial kind. The matter that had brought them together was of very great importance, and he trusted that when they would go back to their different spheres they would be encouraged and quickened to abide by the good old way.

Rev. James Parker, Ph.D., Jersey City, also returned thanks. They had come to give sympathy and to get it. Psalm-singers were possibly a little lonely, and it was a good thing for them to get together. The benefit and blessing of that great gathering would not be to the Psalm-singers alone.

Rev. J. S. Fraser, Seattle, Washington, Pa., rejoiced that they were permitted to meet from very distant parts of the world, and that they were united in regard to the principles that pertained to the doctrine and worship of God.

Rev. James Kerr, D.D., Glasgow, united with his fellow-representatives in returning thanks to the meeting for the cordial welcome extended to the delegates and the admirable words addressed to them by the chairman. During the next few days they might be referred to as controversialists, but he held they were defenders of a position in which they were all agreed as a Presbyterian Church within the last twenty-five years. Let them stand firm on that great momentous question, and if they were true to one another and true to God the battle would be won and the Redeemer crowned King of kings and Lord of lords.

The meeting was closed with praise (Psalm 106, 1-5), and by pronouncing the Benediction.

WEDNESDAY, 6th AUGUST.

FORENOON MEETING, from 11 to 1 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN:—

REV. PROFESSOR PETTICREW, M.A., D.D., D.Lit., Londonderry, Ireland.

PRAISE—Psalm 145, 1-7 (2nd version).

Rev. James Kerr, D.D., Glasgow, Scotland, led in prayer.

Chairman's Address:—

Reverend brethren and other Christian friends from various lands and of different Churches, but all one in Christ Jesus, and all met for a common purpose, permit me to renew to you all the welcome already accorded to as many of you as were able to be present at the meeting last evening. We are much gratified at finding among us so many honoured brethren from a distance, representatives of Churches that regard the inspired Psalter as the one Book of Praise given and appointed by God to be sung in the worship of His house to the end of time; and it is our earnest hope and prayer that our intercourse together and the interchange of sentiment in connection with these meetings, may be profitable to us all, and that the result, by the blessing of God, may be in some degree to advance the cause that has brought us together, and the welfare of which we all have so much at heart.

If, by the good hand of our God upon us, one effect of our Conference should be to call back to a greater use of the Psalms in the Ordinance of Praise some of the Churches from whose praise they have already disappeared, or are fast disappearing, to make way for hymns, we shall be rendering a service which we are sure will be profitable to them, and which, we think, will also be a service well-pleasing to God.

Our movement is being watched with interest and sympathy by not a few earnest and thoughtful men in various hymn-singing

Churches, who, though not in principle opposed to hymns, are alarmed at the rapidity with which the Psalms are being got rid of since hymn books have been sanctioned or allowed. A few weeks ago, a well-known Professor of the University of Glasgow, when speaking on the question of Church worship, publicly deplored what he described as "the almost complete extinction of the Psalms from the services of God." Of course, he was speaking mainly of the state of things in the Lowlands of Scotland, and not in the Highlands, of which the Rev. Murdo M'Kenzie gave us a different account last evening. A theological Professor in the Southern Presbyterian Church of the United States which uses hymns, writes expressing his "sympathy with any movement that will preserve the Psalms in the service of praise;" and a Professor in the Canadian Presbyterian Church, who would not confine the Church to the use of the Psalms in the Service of Praise, but "who deeply deplores the tendency in many branches of the Church to crowd them out of use altogether," has actually prepared and forwarded a short paper to the Conference on "How best to secure a return to the use of the Psalms in the Ordinance of Praise."

These brethren see clearly enough the evil of the expulsion of the Psalms that is going on, but they do not yet seem to be aware that, when hymns are once introduced, the question, sooner or later, and sooner rather than later, comes to be Psalms *or* hymns. Psalms *and* hymns—the Divine and the human—cannot permanently live together when put on the same level in the Ordinance of Praise. The latter, like Pharaoh's lean kine, eat up the former. As Matthew Henry says, when referring to the setting aside of the altar of God by Ahaz, "Man's invention first jostled *with* God's sacred institution, and then jostled it *out*." When the hymns come in, they first jostle *with* God's sacred institution, the singing of Psalms, and then jostle it *out*. The thing is, of course, done gradually. One hymn first displaces one Psalm, then two hymns displace two Psalms, and so on until the process is complete. There is hardly a Free Church in the world that has sanctioned hymns, in which, after two generations have passed, the Psalms are not completely, or almost completely, cast out. Who now ever hears a Psalm sung among the Independents, Baptists, or Methodists, who have had hymns for a good number of years? The hymns have the field exclusively to themselves. The same is practically the case in Presbyterian Churches that have had the hymns for two or three generations, such as the American Presbyterian Church of the Northern States. Five or six years ago, at the time of our discussion on the sanctioning of a hymn-book,

one of our ministers stated in the General Assembly that he had recently spent some time in the United States and Canada, that he had attended public worship there on thirteen Sabbaths twice a day, and that during all that time he had never heard a single Psalm given out in public worship. The experience of others, in Churches that had admitted hymns, was similar.

In the established Church of Scotland, and in what was formerly the Free Church of Scotland but is now part of the United Free Church, and in the English Presbyterian Church, all of which have had authorised hymn-books only for a few years, the Psalms are fast disappearing. A common thing, especially in towns, is one Psalm to four or five hymns, but in a good many cases even the one Psalm has already dropped out, and hymns only are used.

It seems to be with other Churches now, very much as it was in the Church of England, when Romaine sadly wrote—"Human compositions are preferred to Divine. Man's poetry is exalted above the poetry of the Holy Ghost." Accounting for this strange state of things, Romaine says—"Our people had lost sight of the meaning of the Psalms. They did not see their relation to Jesus Christ. This happened when vital religion began to decay among us, more than a century ago."

It is somewhat remarkable that, even in Churches in which the Psalms have been permitted to be cast aside to make way for hymns, testimony after testimony is borne by prominent men to the incomparable superiority of the Psalms to all the hymns that ever were written.

Professor Iverach of Aberdeen says—"The Psalms extend into the infinities and have no shore. There is not a hymn but I can get through, they all become threadbare; the Psalms I never can fathom. They are the response of the soul to the living God."

Mr. Gladstone wrote these remarkable words to the University of Edinburgh—"All the wonders of Greek civilization heaped together are less wonderful than is the single Book of Psalms." Elsewhere, in his Concordance to the Psalms, he writes, "There are many single verses of the Psalms on which, taken severally, we might be content, so lofty is their nature, to stake the whole argument for a Divine revelation."

Dr. Alexander Whyte of Edinburgh, says, "The Psalms of David shine to this day with a greater splendour than on the day they were first sung. And long after the foundations of this whole earth shall have been ploughed up and removed out of their place, David's Psalms will be sounding out for ever beside the song of Moses and the Lamb. I bless David's name for the blessing my soul gets out of his Psalms every

day I live . . . . Think of the multitudes that no man can number to whom David's Psalms have been their constant song in the house of their pilgrimage . . . . Then, take David's knowledge of God, and his communion with God. There is nothing like it in the whole world again. There are many mysteries of godliness not yet revealed to us; but, to me, the mystery of David's knowledge of God and his communion with God is one of the most mysterious. Had Paul sung David's Psalms, and sent, now the twenty-third to the Philippians, and now the thirty-second and the hundred and thirtieth to the Romans, and now the forty-fifth and the seventy-second to the Colossians, and so on, I would not have wondered. I would wonder at nothing after the coming of Christ, and after His death and His ascension. But it baffles me to silence to see such Psalms as David's before the day of Christ."

Before finishing the quotation, let me say in passing, that Dr. Whyte's difficulty might have been somewhat relieved, had he borne in mind that "known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world;" that the real Author of the Psalms, the Divine Spirit, who sees the end from the beginning, knew all the facts connected with Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, at the time the Psalms were written as well as after the occurrence of those great events; and that these events are referred to in the Psalms in the way that seemed good to the All-wise One, and in a way that will not be out of date till the end of time. "God foreshowed by the mouth of all the prophets the things that His Christ should suffer" (Acts 3, 18). The Holy Spirit, to whom all the truths about the Saviour's life and death were known from eternity, was "in" the prophets when they "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (I Peter 1, 11).

But, after much more to a similar effect, Dr. Whyte concludes thus—"Let him who is feeble in faith, and in repentance, and holiness, and in communion with God, be much in the Psalms. Let the Psalms dwell richly in the feeblest among us, and the feeblest among us will yet be a man of more spiritual strength than David. Sing a heart-strengthening Psalm every morning, and a heart-cleansing and heart-quieting Psalm every night. Seven times every remaining day of your earthly pilgrimage sing a Psalm. Let no place, and no conversation, and no occupation delude you out of your heart-refreshing Psalm. Fill the house of your pilgrimage with the sound of Psalms. Let the prisoners hear you. Let the angels hear you. Let God hear you. Let Him bow down His ear and hear you. Let Him say to His

Son, and to His angels, and to His saints, over you and over your house, I have found a man after mine own heart: with My holy oil have I anointed him."

Similar testimonies could be multiplied to almost any extent, and some of them will, no doubt, be laid before the Conference at a later stage.

Meantime, let it be borne in mind that these matchless and incomparable Psalms—the only book in the world of which such things as have been quoted could be truly said—were given by inspiration of God for the very purpose of being sung in His praise; that they were appointed by God to be used in the Ordinance of Praise to the end of time; that there is not a book of uninspired hymns in existence of which it can be said, God, who appoints all the ordinances of His own worship, appointed the hymns in this book to be offered to Him in the Ordinance of Praise; and that no evidence ever has been produced, or ever can be produced, from the Word of God, that even one single uninspired hymn was ever sung by Divine authority in the praise of God either under the Old Dispensation or the New.

But while Christ, the alone Head of ordinances, has not appointed uninspired hymns for the service of praise, men nowadays constitute themselves their own heads of ordinances, because, as they tell us, they want to sing, in addition to the Psalms, what they call "Christian hymns," in the Ordinance of Praise; as if the Psalms were not Christian hymns, and as if Christ was not to be found in them. Why the Psalms are full of Christ. Christ is the speaker in many of them, and of many of them He alone is the subject. "There is not a page in this Book of Psalms," said Bishop Horsley long ago, "in which the pious reader will not find the Saviour if he reads with a view of finding Him." "The most ignorant and senseless objection ever made to the Psalms," says Rev. Dr. George, "is that they are 'Christless.' The truth is that no book in the Bible reveals Christ with such fulness as is done in the 'Book of Psalms,' not excepting the Gospel according to John or the Epistle to the Hebrews." And our own Dr. Cooke says, "Christ is the man of nearly the whole book. . . . Truly I believe there is one view of Christ that can be discovered only in the Psalms, I mean His inward life. The Holy Spirit has there laid open the inmost thoughts, sorrows, and conflicts of our Lord." The Psalms were often found on His lips when on earth. They contain a revelation of His inner life such as is not found even in the Gospels. They were used by Him, on the night on which He was betrayed, in connection with the institution of the Lord's Supper. He sang them then with His disciples

(Humnesantes), thereby linking together permanently the singing of Psalms and the observance of the Lord's Supper, and thereby fulfilling His own words in the 22nd Psalm, "In the midst of the congregation will I sing praise to Thee" *(Humneso)*. As *Lightfoot* says, "He who could have inspired every disciple to have been a David, sings the Psalms of David." When hanging in agony on the cross He twice quoted from the Psalms, and after His resurrection He said, "All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning Me."

The Apostles, following the example of their Lord, used the Psalms as He did. There is not a tittle of evidence that they ever used anything else in the Ordinance of Praise. They never hint that the Psalms are unsuited to or insufficient for the worship of the Christian Church, and that we are to make a Psalm-book for ourselves now; and that whereas inspired men who could not err made it for Old Testament saints, New Testament saints, with their higher privileges, are to sing in the worship of God the compositions of uninspired men and women who may err—are sure to err—to sing, instead of the songs of "holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," the songs of Romanists, Ritualists, Arians, Socinians, and others, men "of any religion, every religion, or no religion at all."

There is one feature of almost every modern hymn-book to which I wish just a word of allusion before concluding. It has been said, "Give me the making of a nation's songs and I care not who makes her laws." You all know the truth there is in that saying, in regard to secular things; and you know, in particular, how indelibly religious convictions are written on the mind and heart by the words which the people have constantly on their lips in their songs of praise to God in the sanctuary. Well, take in connection with that the undoubted fact that the underlying theology of almost every modern hymn-book is Arminian and not Calvinistic. That is unquestionably true, among others, of the "Church Hymnary," for which the three leading Churches in Scotland and the Irish Presbyterian Church made themselves responsible, and which is being vigorously pushed to the exclusion of the Psalms. Shortly after it was published, the *Sword and Trowel*, which was established by Mr. Spurgeon, and which is an advocate of hymns, brought the serious charge I have mentioned against it. Here is what it said on the point:—"It (The Church Hymnary) lacks that strong backbone of hymns on the doctrines of sovereign grace, as taught in Ephesians 1 or Romans 3, which are so Scripturally set forth in the

Westminster Confession, and which find a place in the Standards of all branches of the Presbyterian Church. This omission is to be regretted, for never was there a time when these cardinal doctrines of Holy Scripture were more necessary to be taught for the instruction and comfort of all believers."

Such is the testimony of the *Sword and Trowel* as to the absence of Calvinistic teaching from the "Church Hymnary," and a similar charge might be brought against modern hymn-books in general.

Well, if the Presbyterian Churches sing as the material of their praise to God hymns whose underlying theology is Arminian and not Calvinistic, is it likely that they will remain permanently Calvinistic in their Confessional theology and in their pulpit teaching? And is it not somewhat significant in this connection that in the largest Presbyterian Church in America, which is a hymn-singing Church, part of the Calvinism of the Confession is being got rid of or explained away at the present moment; and that in the largest Presbyterian Church in Scotland, which is a hymn-singing Church, there was a determined attack made on the Calvinism of the Confession at the meeting of the General Assembly in May last?

Before sitting down, I think it only fair to others to say that it was not on this side of the water that the idea of this Conference originated. So, any credit there may be in connection with it does not belong to us. It was first suggested to us by one who is now a minister of the United Presbyterian Church of America, Mr. Lowry, of Clarinda, Iowa, who has taken a deep interest in it all along, and has worked harder for its success probably than any other. The only credit we on this side have in the matter is that, after some correspondence on the subject, we fell in with it, and that we did our best to make the necessary arrangements.

THE SINGING OF PRAISE: ITS DIVINE AUTHORITY AND OBJECTS.

By REV. MURDO MACKENZIE, Inverness, Scotland.

In the public worship of God nothing is to be introduced without the divine sanction. Ascribing praise and thanksgiving unto God is a part of divine worship for which we can

claim divine authority. According to the Confession of Faith—The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear, the sound preaching and conscionable hearing of the Word in obedience unto God with understanding, faith, and reverence; singing of Psalms with grace in the heart, &c., are parts of the ordinary religious worship of God. Here, then, the singing of Psalms is recognised as a part of the worship of God.

To praise the Lord is the duty of every rational creature. Besides, we have His own positive command for it. The Lord said to Moses, to say to the children of Israel: "But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy, to praise the Lord withal" (Lev. 19, 24). Thus God commanded Israel to praise the Lord with the fruit of the fourth year. And we also have positive authority for celebrating this praise in song. The Lord said to Moses, "Now, therefore, write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for Me against the children of Israel" (Deut. 31, 19). And in the song itself we see that praise is to be ascribed to God: "Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God" (Deut. 32, 3). We also have inferential authority for celebrating praise to our God in a song. When the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, Moses and they sang this triumphant song—"I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea." Miriam and all the women joined in singing this song. Deborah also celebrated in her song the praises of the Lord, for giving the victory to Israel. The Psalms abound with exhortations and invitations to praise the Lord in a song. "O come, let us sing to the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation." David said, "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage." "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God as long as I have my being." The Old Testament is full of the subject of singing praises to God. And in the New we have the example of Christ and His apostles. Singing the praises of God was a part of the service connected with the first celebration of the Supper: "When they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives." Following this example, the Presbyterian Church sings a Psalm when the sacrament of the Supper is administered. And we find the apostle Paul thus enjoins the Ephesians: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." And in the same manner he exhorts the Colossians: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and ad-

monishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

We thus find, as singing with the voice was used in the worship of God under the Old Testament, and was never repealed (as the ceremonial rites, which were only temporary, were), but enjoined, surely it is incumbent upon Christians to sing with the voice, and, in order to be acceptable to God, with grace in the heart.

We know that the singing of God's praise is not confined to the Church of God on earth, but that it forms a special part of the service in heaven. "They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." The four living creatures and twenty-four elders sang a new song to the Lamb that was in the midst of the throne. "After these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God." "And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

The learning to sing the praise of God begins on earth and is continued in heaven; and the new song is not that of angels, but of the redeemed from the earth, into whose mouths the Lord has put a new song, even praise to our God. Thus far, as regards our divine authority for singing praise.

Its objects. Singing the praise of God has for its object the manifestation of the divine excellencies, praising God for what He is in Himself and what He is to His people. Jeremiah says, "Thou art my praise"—that is, the object of his praise. We are to praise Him with all the powers of the mind and soul. And as He endowed man with musical talent, he is under obligation to consecrate that talent to Him and to His service and glory, as David, the great Psalmist of Israel, did. "I will sing and give praise." "I will sing unto Thee among the nations."

Heathen poets celebrated the virtues of their heroes in song. How much more ought Christians to celebrate the praises of Him, the living One, that was dead and is alive again! They sang in praise of imaginary deities. We, enlightened by the Spirit and grace of God, should sing in praise of the glorious excellencies and divine perfections of the living and true God. "Let us sing unto the Lord." "Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with Psalms."

We are to celebrate the praise of God in the trinity of His person, and in connection with the contrivance, working out, and application of the work of redemption—to the Father, for His great love in giving His Son for our redemption ; to the Son, for His love in working it out; and to the Spirit, for His love in the application of it. When we are in a joyful mood we are commanded to sing. "Is any merry? Let him sing Psalms." When the ploughman labours in the field, the shepherd tends his flock, the mariner as he sails across the seas, and the mechanic at his bench, beguile the time by singing, so the Christian at his work lifts up his heart and voice to God, and makes His statutes his song in the house of his pilgrimage. David must refer to this when he says,

"Sev'n times a day it is my care
To give due praise to Thee."

We sing praise to God for our blessings and mercies, expressing our gratitude to Him for the blessings of His providence, but more especially for the blessings of His grace. And if Christ occupy the throne of our hearts, it will be our delight to sing praises to Him, Who loved us and gave Himself instead of us, washing us in His blood from our sins.

Then, singing the praises of God has an enlivening effect upon the mind ; it raises the soul heavenward, it soothes and comforts the soul as it is engaged in praising God for the gifts of His love.

"O come, let us sing to the Lord:
Come, let us ev'ry one
A joyful noise make to the Rock
Of our salvation."

THE SINGING OF PRAISE: ITS DIVINE AUTHORITY AND OBJECTS.*

By REV. W. B. SMILEY, D.D., Canonsburg, Pa., U.S.A.

The subject to be considered in this paper is one which narrows itself within certain well-defined limits. Were it the general subject of giving praise to God that was being con-

* Read by Rev James Parker, Ph.D., Jersey City, U.S.A.

sidered, a much broader field would be opened from which to gather truth bearing upon it. The ways in which praise may be offered to God are all but innumerable, but it is expected that this paper will present some divine authority for the praising of God in song, and suggest some objects to be accomplished thereby. The Scriptures abound in passages calling upon us to praise the Lord, and in many of these it is clearly implied in the context, that it is the singing of praise that is in the mind of the writer without that fact being distinctly stated in the passage itself; while in others it is clear that it is the bestowment of praise in some other way is being contemplated. For example, in the 145th Psalm it is declared, "All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord; and Thy saints shall bless Thee." And again in the 148th Psalm the exhortation is given to "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons and all deeps; Fire and hail, snow and vapours, stormy winds, fulfilling His word; mountains and all hills; fruitful trees and all ceders; beasts and all cattle," &c. And all such passages clearly imply other ways of praising the Lord than the singing of praise in the worship of His sanctuary.

Furthermore, my subject does not require me to deal with the question as to what songs should be used in the singing of praise, which is the subject lying nearest to the heart of this Conference, in the interests of which we are gathered together from widely different quarters of the globe. But back of this great question, there lies the question of our right to praise God with songs of any sort, and for a little this subject will engage our attention. In the first place, we may refer to a class of Scripture passages which seem to have been the outgrowth of the religious experience of those who uttered them, which experience was doubtless the result of the influence of the Divine Spirit. We read that "David spake unto the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies and out of the hand of Saul." And after recounting his experiences and expressing his appreciation of the glorious character of God, he closes by saying, "Therefore I will give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto Thy name." And whilst this song is preserved in one of the historical books, it is also thought worthy of a place in the Psalter of the Church, and is recorded as the 18th Psalm. The 27th Psalm grows out of a somewhat similar experience, being an expression of praise and thanksgiving in view of the exalted character of God as revealed to the Psalmist in his own providential and spiritcal experience. And after dwelling upon the many gracious things which God had done and was

likely to do for him, he says, "Therefore, I will offer in His Tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea I will sing praises unto the Lord." Of a like import is the language of the 28th Psalm, where he says, "The Lord is my strength and my shield, my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; therefore, my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise Him." And in the 69th Psalm he says, "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or a bullock that hath horns and hoofs." And if we had no more direct authority from the divine word than these utterances of what might be termed the inspired experiences of God's servants, we would certainly be justified in believing that such a sacrifice would be as pleasing to God now as in days of old, when it was the offering of a heart burdened with a sense of His merciful and gracious nature. But the inspired writers have not limited their utterances upon this subject to an expression of what they felt to be fitting and proper in their own experience, but have also declared what is the divine will for others as well. In the 135th Psalm the command is given to "Praise the Lord; for the Lord is good; sing praises unto His name; for it is pleasant." And in 2nd Chronicles, 29, 30, we read that "Hezekiah, the king, and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer." And in the 9th Psalm the exhortation is, "Sing praises to the Lord, Who dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people His doings." And in the 47th Psalm there is one of like import:—"Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King sing praises." And in the 68th Psalm the command is given to "Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O, sing praises unto the Lord." And certainly Paul and Silas must have felt that they had divine authority for their conduct, and there is good evidence that it was pleasing to the Lord, when they prayed that night in the prison at Philippi, and sang praises unto God And it is certainly of the song service of the Church that he speaks, when he exhorts us to "be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." But perhaps the climax of divine authority for offering praise to God in song is found in the recorded experience of Him Who was in all points made like unto His brethren, and Who has left us an example that we should follow His steps. And the inspired writer represents Him as saying, "I will declare Thy name unto My brethren, in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto Thee."

And now in regard to the *objects* of such a service, certainly

the first to be mentioned is *the Worship of God.* Are we not wont to say, "Let us worship God by singing to His praise such and such a Psalm"? This is one great end to be accomplished by the establishment of this ordinance as a part of the service of the Church. It is essential to the very nature of praise that it should exalt and magnify the one upon whom it is bestowed. And so the Lord Himself is represented as saying, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me." And what higher object is there to be accomplished in the service of our lives, or what better way of showing forth the glory of God than by singing, with the spirit and the understanding, His praise? It is true there may be the singing of praise without worship, just as there may be the formal offering of any other part of our religious service; but certainly the ordinance is as well calculated to develop the spirit of true worship as any other part of our congregational service, and much *better* than some. If we can allow the sentiment of these blessed songs of Sion to pass through our lips in song, without the heart going out in adoring gratitude and reverent and devout worship to Him Who is thought worthy of such praise, we are certainly failing to enter, in any true sense, into the spirit of the service in which we are engaged. The praise service of the congregation, to be in keeping with its true nature, should be the outgrowth of exalted sentiment cherished in the soul, with reference to the glorious character of the divine Being Who is the object of our praises. Without doubt it was in this spirit that our Psalms were written and first sung in praise to God. It was the spirit of a devout worshipper who first said, "O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory." "For Thy mercy is great above the heavens: and Thy truth reaches unto the clouds." And again, "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O most High." "For Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy work, and Thy thoughts are very deep." "Thou, Lord, art most high for evermore." Certainly none but a devout worshipper can offer in praise to God such sentiments as these in the spirit in which they were first uttered, and intended ever afterward to be sung.

But aside from being a fit channel through which to present our offering of worship, the singing of praise is calculated to produce a happy effect upon the spirit of the worshipper. Is this not what the Psalmist has in mind when he says, "Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God." One cannot give utterance to such sentiments as are found in a true song of praise, in anything like the proper spirit, without coming to experience a deep and true sympathy

with the sentiment expressed. No song can be sung to the best purpose and effect without the sentiment being cherished in the heart. Hence one has said, "Let me write the songs of a nation, and I care not who may write its laws." This being true, then what better way of elevating, purifying, and sanctifying man's innermost nature than by calling forth from his heart utterances of praise to God, for His glorious character as manifested in His gracious dealings with the children of men? It is good, therefore, to sing praises unto God, because it tends to cultivate within us a character in harmony with the character of Him upon Whom our praises are bestowed.

Who does not know that there is a spiritual fragrance about the Psalms that can only come from a nature deeply and truly saturated with the Spirit of God? And we cannot sing these songs properly in praise to Him, without cultivating this spirit to some extent, and giving forth something of this fragrance in our own spiritual experience. It is this fact that gives us one of our strongest arguments in favour of the inspired Psalmody of the Church. The sentiments of the songs in due time become the sentiments of the worshippers, and hence to keep error out of the life it must not be given opportunity to express itself in the songs of worship. People soon come to believe what they sing, hence it is good to sing praise unto God in the language of inspired song. But singing praise is not merely a profitable religious exercise, but is intended to afford pleasure as well. The Psalmist says, "The Lord is good; sing praises unto His name; for it is pleasant." And the Apostle James writes, "Is any merry? let him sing Psalms." It is pleasant to sing praise, because a joyful spirit is essential to the exercise in which we engage. A gloomy, sour, or despondent spirit does not seek to express itself in song. The Hebrews could not sing God's songs in their captivity. The spirit of praise was not in their hearts, because they were discontented and unhappy. But when their captivity was broken and they were returning to their own land they could say, "Our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing." "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." And wherever there is true gladness of soul, joy of heart, growing out of the goodness of God, nothing can better afford expression for such feelings than a Psalm of praise. And with difficulty can song be restrained under such conditions. But not only is joy expressed in song, it is in some measure created and very greatly intensified by it. How lacking in fervour, and in the spirit of joyful worship, would our service be without songs of praise! A good praise service tends somewhat to beget a

spirit in the worship akin to that of the heavenly host, whom John saw standing on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and singing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints." In view of these facts, who will say that we are magnifying out of due proportion this part of divine service by such a Conference as the one we are now holding? Does not the praise service deserve more careful consideration than it ordinarily receives? May it please God to own this Conference, and use it to His own glory in deepening the spirit of praise in the hearts of His people!

THE PSALMS, THE DIVINELY-AUTHORIZED BOOK OF PRAISE.*

By REV. JOHN WILLIAMSON, D.D., Tingley, Iowa, U.S.A.

Those who confine themselves to the use of the Psalms as the medium of praise have one sweet satisfaction that no other can claim; they know their service has the Divine warrant. Possibly lack of thought concerning the matter of authorization will in part, at least, account for the readiness with which the masses fall into the habit of the singing of songs for which no authority can be shown. If asked by any, "Who hath required this at your hands?" the Word furnishes this answer, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God." All scholars readily recognise these words, "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," as the terms by which the Psalms of inspiration are designated in the Hebrew Psalter. And is it not significant that immediately following this exhortation the Apostle adds these words: "And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father through Him"? Does it not seem as if the Holy Spirit had foreseen the baseless proposition we sometimes hear in these days that there is no Christ in the Psalms? He would inform us differently, even as the Christ, as He was sitting with the

* Read by Rev. J. S. Fraser, Seattle, Washington, Pa., U.S.A.

disciples, in that upper room, after His resurrection, said unto them: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning Me."

Reverence for authority, or even for God Himself, is not a prominent characteristic of this age. But surely in our approaches to God as worshippers, we want to know that we are authorized to come, and to see to it that we come as authorized. It is recognized as a courtesy due King Edward, that those, who have any part in his coronation, shall conform to authorized custom, even in the manner of dress. Yet he is but a man like ourselves whose tenure of office may close in a day. Jehovah was very careful to instruct that every approach to Him should be made according to directions given. Nadab and Abihu thought it all right that they should kindle the incense with "strange fire." The incense itself was as God had appointed, just what He had told them to offer. It was simply ignited differently from the manner divinely prescribed. The appalling results of God's displeasure were seen, as their dead bodies were borne from out the holy place. But that was under the law. Yes. But shall we presume, because we are not under the law, but under grace? What shall we answer, when He Whom we profess to worship asks, "When ye come to appear before Me, who hath required this at your hands, to trample My courts?" While the Lord says, "Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and causest to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell in Thy courts," is it not fitting, nay, is it not imperative, that that approach be made as God directs? Had no direction been given, then lack of reverence, or charge of disobedience, could not be preferred against us. Or had the Holy Spirit anywhere said, or even intimated, that we might come with such words of praise as our heart's promptings might move us to utter, as the Lord says to us in regard to prayer, "If ye shall ask anything of the Father He will give it you in My name," "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," then we would have, at least, seeming warrant for coming with such words as we might choose. No intimation of any such liberty, if such it may be called, is upon record.

But it is written: "Is any merry? let him sing Psalms." "And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." Again, "Sing unto Him, sing Psalms unto Him; talk ye of all His wondrous works." "Let

us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with Psalms." With such injunctions as these the word of God abounds. Our warrant then is clear.

Those who accept, as a part of their declaration of faith, that "The second commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images or any other way not appointed in His Word," would surely do well to look at this matter, that they may not be accused of a glaring inconsistency.

Is there appointment for anything else? If so, when and where was it made known? Ought we not to have a plain, "Thus saith the Lord," for any service we call holy? Presumption, in the solemn worship of the Holy One, is a something to be most carefully shunned. The liberty we enjoy in Christ Jesus is the liberty to act in accordance with law. In the worship of God, if anywhere, we should "do all things, according as it is written."

As an abstract proposition this will be admitted as truth. We should serve God, especially in worship, with the very best we have. "Without blemish and without spot," was the requirement concerning offerings of the former dispensation. Now, when we come before Him in the name of Him who is called "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world," is it reasonable that we should be less careful to honour Him, Who for us has wrought this great redemption, than were those of that early day? Will any presume to compare for excellency that which any man has given us, with that given us by the Holy Spirit? As well compare the glory of sunlight with that of a smoking coal oil lamp.

Some may think the man-made work preferable. There is no accounting for tastes sometimes. But how will the Lord, Who cautions us against grieving the Holy Spirit, compare them? It has passed into an adage that it is human to err. Erring sinful man defiles everything he touches. Perfection is to be found in none of his works; but the work of God is perfect. And since He has furnished us this incomparable Book of praises and has commanded us to worship Him therewith, who will presume to justify the contempt put upon the work of the Holy Spirit, by substituting therefor, or by placing on an equality therewith, that which is but human and which necessarily abounds in error?

The example of the Lord and of His disciples is recognized as all-sufficient authority. If it can be shown that the Lord or His apostles by whom the Church of the New Testament was organized and first administered used anything else than the songs of inspiration, then might it be pleaded that there was an annulling of the things going before in this line.

Though even then the command given, to sing the Psalms, would forbid their displacement, as is the custom with all so called hymn-singing Churches, but no one presumes to say that either Christ or His apostles did anything of the kind. Or if any man will say they did, there is no proof that the assertion has even a shadow of justification.

Just before that solemn march to Gethsemane, after having partaken of that last supper, Christ and His disciples sang a Psalm, as both Matthew and Mark inform us. Had it been thought that any other medium of praise was needed, or had it been the will of the King and Head of the Church that anything else should be used in His worship, would not some provision have been made therefor? The Lord and His apostles thought the Psalms, divinely furnished, sufficient for them. These they did use while furnishing no other, and authorizing no one to provide others. As the apostles went forth in obedience to the great commission to preach the gospel to the world they used the praise songs already furnished them of the Spirit, from which songs the resurrected Lord expounded the things concerning Himself.

Since then the authority for the use of the Psalms is definite and ample, and for anything else authority is sought in vain, do we not well to withstand the tide of modern poetry, much of which is but gush and drivel, having scarcely the semblance of praise, by which it is sought to supplant these God-given, and God-appointed, songs of praise, that simply for excellency and sublimity of thought are infinitely superior, and in the offering of which we know we have the sanction of Him Whom we desire, and Whom we are commanded to worship?

"Give thanks to God, call on His name,
To men His deeds make known,
Sing ye to Him, sing Psalms, proclaim
His wondrous works each one."

PRAISE—Psalm 95: 1-5.

THE PRESUMPTION OF MAN IN ATTEMPTING TO AMEND THE ORDINANCES OF GOD.

By REV. N. M. BROWN, D.D., LL.D., Limavady, Ireland.

When Adam was created, he bore the stamp and likeness of his Maker, "in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness."

His helpmeet was fashioned in the same image, and was endowed with similar attributes. The tempter, in the guise of a friend, assailed the woman when alone, and plied her with persuasive but lying arguments to distrust her Maker and to renounce the authority of her great and good Master. With the terms of the Covenant of Works she seems to have been well acquainted, for she quotes them fully and accurately in replying to the insinuating question, as to eating or not eating, put by the serpent. "We may eat," said she, "of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." She acknowledges that her husband and herself are amenable to God's righteous authority; and, in her unfallen state, she never hints that the "command" of her Heavenly Father is either irksome or grievous. Her wily tempter at once flatly contradicts the threat of death for disobedience, and roundly asserts that it is jealousy or ill-will upon the part of God that leads Him to subject the man and his wife to a series of losses, crosses, and disabilities. It was only from the arch-liar, and from hell itself, that those deceitful and villainous assertions could come, "Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that, in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." In process of the dangerous interview she is won over by the blandishments and pressing appeals of her false friend, and, disobeying the authority and command of her Maker and Master, she violates the covenant by a wilful and personal act; and the "innovator" becomes a temptress herself, and leads her husband, also, into sin and death. "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." Through the influence of false teaching they presumed to think that the terms of the Covenant of Works were neither honourable to God Himself nor equitable and advantageous to themselves; and so they concluded that these terms would be more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Shocking presumption! deadly error!! rash and wilful disobedience!!!—the fearful effects of which you and I, and all of us, labour and sigh under till the present hour.

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, which had hitherto been only the medium through which the malicious, wily, and lying fiend had plied his varied temptations, now came to the front in threatening and dangerous guise, and became rampant and dominant principles in the heart and intellect and life of the creatures whom God had

formed and fashioned in His own image. The glory of God, which should ever have been man's highest aim and object, was now either overlooked and forgotten, or had "to take a back seat": whilst the pleasures of sense and the gratification of sinful lusts, passions, and vanities were regarded by the fallen creature as the highest wisdom and the supreme good. Proud and haughty self-sufficiency and daring presumption manifested themselves in every field that man was tolerated to traverse; and "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil," and that "continually." No wonder that God, thus provoked, despised, and set at naught, was stirred up in His wrath to make a clean end of the whole human family. But in the midst of deserved wrath He remembered mercy, and spared Noah and his family—eight persons in all—when the remorseless deluge swept off every other living member of our hardened, daring, and presumptuous race. When the deluge was past, God reminded Noah that judgment is His strange work; that He delights in mercy; and that with the wickedest and the worst He warns and waits long before the bolt of vengeance falls. Of God's patience and long-suffering Noah himself was a good judge: for through the long years in which he exerted his energies in the building of the ark, every beam he laid on and every nail he drave home was an additional warning to a hardened world, and an additional putting of the tender-hearted question to the perishing sons and daughters of humanity—"Why will ye die?" When Noah's sacrificial thanks were paid to the good and gracious Being who had spared him and saved him, his kind-hearted Heavenly Father gave him a promise that He would never destroy this world with a flood again; and He gave him a visible pledge of the truth and abiding character of that promise by the rainbow in the cloud, which is a reminder of God's goodness and mercy to all generations. Noah doubtless believed the promise, and fully relied upon it: but his descendants, in process of time, began to doubt it, and presumptuously imagined that by their own plans, schemes, and exertions they could "make surety doubly sure." God might be well-meaning and duly in earnest in guaranteeing safety against another flood, but they were presumptuous enough to suppose that they "could go one better" by helping themselves and raising a tower that would lift them to a certainty above the mud and sludge and rush of the mightiest waters, and make a physical stairway, eventually, to the highest heavens. This mad and presumptuous undertaking went forward on the plain of Shinar for many a long year, whilst God looked on with rising indignation and with many a rebuke signally administered, but with amazing long suffering. At

length the long-suffering of the Holy One and the Just was wearied out, and He arose in His majesty and might, confounded their language, hurled them and their puny and presumptuous works to the ground with a great overthrow, and scattered them far and wide over the face of the earth.

Man, in his fallen and ignorant and unregenerate condition, still considers that he is wiser than God, and that by his own natural wisdom and cultured attainments he can eke out and develop to a higher degree of perfection the works and worship, the appointments and commands, the ordinances and laws of the great Jehovah, Who is perfect and righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works. To check man's presumption, and to keep him right in thought, in word, and in deed, God gave him a revelation of His will. He even embodied in the inspired and divine revelation a record of the promise of a Saviour, that promise which had been given by a merciful Jehovah to His fallen and ruined creatures before they were driven from the garden of Eden. He sent prophets from time to time, who were inspired men, and who were well acquainted with God's mind and will, to teach, to instruct, to edify, to enlighten and to warn the people, that their lives might be brought into conformity with the commands and ordinances of their Heavenly Father. The duties that the human family owed to their great and good Maker and Master, and the duties which they owed to one another, were systematized and codified and inscribed by the finger of God on two tables of stone, to serve as a rule of life through all generations. This moral law, consisting of ten commandments, and written upon two tables, with four upon the first, and six upon the second, was fulfilled by the active and passive obedience of the great God-man Mediator on behalf of all His elect people; but still it is enjoined upon them to render the obedience of faith and love—to live as He lived, and to walk as He walked. The Plymouth Brethren of every degree, both close and open, and other "sinless perfectionists," may talk, in their self-righteous presumption, of the "new man" and of their own pure and innocent character. They may also deny their liability to punishment for any breach of the moral law by "the old man." But the police magistrate was right, both in logic and theology, when he condemned the Plymouth Brother who had taken undue liberties with his neighbour's property, but excused himself by saying that it was "the old man" that committed the theft; but that, as he was a "new man," he was sakeless and sinless! "Well," said the magistrate, "we shall only interfere with 'the old man' who did the deed. Him we shall detain in gaol for three months; and

'the new man,' that you aver to be innocent and sinless, can just go home!"

But the presumption of the votaries of the Vatican is still more offensive and outrageous in their dealing with the ten commandments of the moral law: for these worthies, finding that the second commandment did not square with their superstitious and idolatrous theories and practices, considered that the best thing they could do was to set it aside altogether. Instead of submitting to the mind and will and righteous command of the only living and true God, they feel disposed to ignore His authority and assert their own. The unenlightened and natural man is always an idolater. He likes to make his own god, that he may have something tangible and visible before his natural eye as an object of adoration and worship: and though it can neither see, nor hear, nor help, yet, in a measure, it gratifies "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" to have his deity under his own superintendence and control. Crosses and crucifixes, the spurious likenesses of saints and angels, and, above all, of the "Madonna," that good woman whom they style "the mother of God," must be retained; and the commandment condemning these visible objects of adoration and worship must be wholly erased from the first table of God's law, leaving but three where there were previously four. If it be worth while, for the sake of appearances, to keep up the old number of *ten*, it will be easy to divide the tenth and last, and make *two* of it. The one sin of covetousness can be as effectually denounced in two modified sections, the reckless innovator avers: and his presumptuous amendment is made to run in this order: First, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife: and second, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods. Near the close of the Canon of Scripture there is a dire denunciation of all who would have the hardihood and presumption to mangle Scripture and Scriptural ordinances by either adding to them or taking from them. The God of truth and righteousness and absolute perfection has left the stamp and impress of His own complete and unerring nature and character on His word and law and ordinances, so that He will not tolerate rash and self-sufficient and presumptuous men to add anything, or to take anything away. In the mangling of the ten commandments the bold and presumptuous votaries of Rome have been guilty of the sin of both adding and taking away, for they added a new commandment under the head of covetousness, and they took another entirely away because it condemned their superstition and idolatry.

But Rome was not content in going even thus far in her presumptuous and daring innovations. She found the sacra-

ments of the New Testament limited to two, bearing the names of "Baptism" and the "Lord's Supper," and appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the King and Head of the Church. But Rome, in her overweening pride and presumption, had no hesitation in adding five of her own to the two appointed by the Church's King and Head. The inmate of the Vatican, styling himself "the vicar of Christ," arrogates to himself authority and power to make and unmake, to bind and loose, to command and to decree, and even to create, which he undertakes to accomplish by a few mumbling and blasphemous phrases pronounced over the bread and wine in the elements of the Lord's Supper. He asks us to believe, in his daring presumption, that his mumbled utterance has accomplished a miracle, and has changed "the bread and wine" into "the body, blood, soul and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ." It is no wonder that Popery has always chained the Bible to the altar foot, and prevented its spread among the people, for every page of it reveals the deceitfulness of "the man of sin," and exposes, as with a searchlight, the most elaborate masterpiece of tyranny, lies, and superstition that has ever cropped up in our fallen world. In Reformation times the impounded volume burst its bonds and blazed out upon an astonished world with overwhelming lustre. Its light has dissipated the gloom of error and superstition, and to millions of our race, men, women, and children, it has revealed, in the simplicity of gospel truth, a living and a loving Saviour in all His willingness and ability to save. The lustre of gospel light will never be dimmed or obscured again till the glorious time shall be reached when no man will need to say to his brother, Know the Lord; but when all shall know Him, from the least even to the greatest.

The advance of art and science, of literature and philosophy, of culture and of wealth, in our own day, has made an highway, as it were, for the progress of the gospel, not only in our own land, but also in lands that lie afar, where strange tongues are spoken and where strange faces glow. But whilst the message of mercy goes abroad for the evangelisation of the nations, and for the salvation of those that are perishing for lack of knowledge, we must see to it that the gospel message goes out in all its simplicity and purity. When men become socially advanced, they are apt to become self-important and dictatorial; and if they be not renewed men, they are prone to indulge the lusts of the flesh and the lusts of the eye, and to illustrate in their own persons the pride of life. Such indulgences are not confined altogether to temporalities, but trench occasionally even upon the spiritual domain. Daring presumption, as we have seen,

has not only interfered with the letter and the laws and the doctrines of God's inspired Book, both by adding and by taking away; but the worship of the living God is not infrequently called upon to pander to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, both in the matter of the worship and in the manner of it. That the worship of God is made pleasing to *man* appears to be the great concern of the fashionable and cultured multitude: that it is pleasing to *God* appears to be a matter of but secondary consideration. Those that are accustomed with operatic music throughout the working days of the week, and like it, demand it on "Sunday" (as it is called) as well as on Saturday. There may be in the congregation a few weak, inelegant, and uncultured old "Puritans," who talk about conscience, and dislike the "innovation"; but their views are not abreast of the times, and their objections are but of little weight, and are unworthy, says the fashionable "innovator," of the smallest consideration. But man's presumption is as prominent and marked in the *matter* of the divine praise, as in the *manner* of it. For many an age the submissive servants of God Almighty were disposed to be guided by Himself in this ordinance. The inspired Psalmist settled the question for them, both as to manner and matter, when he said, "Sing unto Him – sing Psalms." And James in New Testament times informed them that in gladsome seasons, and in mirthful moments, inspired songs were by no means out of place. "Is any merry? let him sing Psalms." But says some cavilling brother, who wishes to escape from divine restrictions and inspired obligations in the *matter* of praise, has not the apostle Paul said in the Epistle to the Colossians, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord"? and if he has thus expressed himself by the Spirit, does that not open the door for human hymns in the worship of God in the sanctuary? We say, No: and we challenge him to prove the contrary. If we assert that these "spiritual songs" are all "songs of the Spirit," can he, and will he, deny it? If we maintain that these "psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs," are all included within the sacred environment of the inspired Canon, under their several headings, will he have the hardihood to contradict us? And if he contradict, where is his proof? "The word of Christ" that dwells in these men "richly in all wisdom" must be divine, and is something more precious than the word of any poetaster that presumes to think himself wise enough and good enough to write scraps of poetry for a human "hymnary."

Ah! but, says some other caviller, the modern Psalm-book,

now in use, is a different article from the old inspired Hebrew Psalter. There are many words, and even phrases and lines, that are uninspired and merely human. Well, would this objection not apply even to the whole Bible? The exigencies of translation into the modern languages, in which they now stand, may have required additional words, to make the meaning of the inspired original plain; but what of that? There is not a new thought added or an old one taken away. They are still the inspired Psalter, and the inspired Scriptures; the one the God-given and accredited vehicle of praise to Jehovah, and the other the God-given and accredited vehicle of saving truth to man. If it can be shown that a closer or more accurate translation is required, why, let us have it. But the Word of the Lord containing all saving truth, and all His authoritative commandments, bearing upon both doctrine and worship, is left to us still; and this is the word, unmutilated and unmixed, that "liveth and abideth for ever."

But a third caviller arises and tells us that the old inspired psalm-book is behind the times, that it is not up-to-date, and that it is grey with age, and belongs to a long past generation that went to its rest, some three thousand years ago. But might we not ask, Is that not a sign of its indestructible character, and of its heavenly origin? Is that not a proof of its being part and parcel of the living word that is as undying and unchangeable as its divine Author? Of what uninspired hymn-books can the same thing be said? They all had their little day, but they vanished in their turn like the shadows of the evening. Like Jonah's gourd, "they sprang up in a night and perished in a night." And even the modern "hymnaries," in present use, of imposing proportions and of pretentious claims, are no better than their predecessors, and are as frail and fleeting as those that have gone before. When they have served their purpose, and lived their little day, they shall, by-and-bye, be relegated, like all the rest, to the moles and to the bats! But the inspired Psalms—those songs of salvation, that were sung by prophets and apostles and martyrs in all their triumphs and in all their sufferings, and that lingered upon the Saviour's own lips in His dying agony—shall live through all generations till the last trumpet shall be blown, and shall cheer the hearts of God's faithful pilgrims all the way home to the house of many mansions. The Churches that hold by the living and divine Head shall meet and mingle and coalesce by the way, and become one in their loving Lord; and the only song-book agreed upon by all then will be the "inspired Psalter" of the "sweet singer of Israel."

But what shall we say of the daring deed that has brought

the divine and the human to the same level, and has bound up in one volume, as of equal importance, the word of God and the word of man, the inspired and the uninspired, the living and the dead, the utterances of the man after God's own heart, who spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, and the mutterings of the "pervert," whose highest inspiration was the "kindly light" that shone from the Vatican and "led" him into the quagmire of superstition, where it left him hopelessly floundering in the bog!

"Be not unequally yoked," says God. But daring and presumptuous men will undertake to put together and harmonize the most discordant elements; and where fashion and style dictate the spiritual, and indicate the line of action, the divine must bow to the human, and the truth of the inspired Psalmist must give way to the drivelling hallucinations of the priest or the cardinal! In going into one of our would-be fashionable congregations for the worship of God on the Sabbath, it is more than probable that the opening song may be Newman's "Lead, kindly light"; but, to calm apprehensions and furnish a panacea for breaking hearts, you may be privileged to sing "The Lord's my shepherd" at the close. But you will see plainly that the human and the fashionable are "in the ascendant," and that the divine and the inspired are being gradually "driven to the wall." In ten years' time, perhaps, you may go into the same church and find no inspired songs there whatever, and the entire service given over to style and fashion and culture, with Ritualism rampant in both the pulpit and the pews!

Many are watching and waiting for some advanced and ghastly proposal to bind up a number of spicy and spirited sermons with the Bible itself! Some may smile at the idea of such presumption; but what is the difference between binding up together, for indiscriminate use, the writings of the Psalmist and of Romish poetasters, and doing the same thing with the writings of Moses and the prophets and the effusions and lucubrations of, say, the Rev. Reuben Ritualist and the Rev. Isaac Innovator? Think of attending a service where the cultured cleric officiating reads the first chapter from the writings of the apostle Paul, and the second chapter from the sermons of the Rev. Isaac Innovator, bound up together in the same Bible; and listen to the liturgical formula with which, in identical terms, the readings in both cases are closed: "Here endeth the reading of the first lesson," and "here endeth the reading of the second lesson." Tell us, when we come to that, how much farther human presumption and innovating daring can go? We have not advanced quite so far as that just yet, but when we find the Hymnary and

the Psalter yoked abreast in the same gospel chariot already, there is no saying what may happen next and next. The heterogeneous praise-book, that is now supposed to be perfected, reminds many of the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream. The head was of fine gold, but the feet were only iron and clay. The great poetic conglomerate called the "Hymnary," being similar in its composition, it would require no "Daniel come to judgment" to tell us the fate and the fortune of this fac-simile and counterpart of Nebuchadnezzar's image.

The cultured innovator, who prides himself on his good taste and style and fashion, maintains that the inspired Psalms are rough and rude and unpolished and hoary, as it were, with the lichen of thirty centuries. Something, he considers, of a more ornate and polished character is needed to keep pace with the march of the times, and to win the smile and approbation of the great Jehovah. A man of this stamp would have made himself prominent, in tendering his services to Elijah that day, when he defeated the eight hundred and fifty priests of Baal and of the groves on the side of Mount Carmel. The turn of the prophet came to build his altar to the honour of Jehovah and to vindicate the existence and character of the living and true God, against Baal, who was no God; and he reared his altar even of the rudest materials, without the slightest objection upon the part of God. The fashionable and polished innovator would have been there with his mallet and chisel, with his plumb-line, level, and rule, to finish the sacrificial structure with cultured science and taste, and thereby render the service and the sacrifice pleasing and acceptable in God's sight. But the prophet of the Lord did not require any of these meretricious adjuncts to secure the favour of the Most High. His willing and ready hand, directed and guided by his warm, trusting, and devoted heart, gathered twelve rough and moss-grown boulders from the mountain slope, arranged them in becoming order, clove the wood, slew the bullock, laid on the sacrifice, and waited for the fire in answer to prayer. The fire descended, the sacrifice was consumed, the water was licked up from the surrounding trenches, and Ahab and Jezebel, with their army of innovating priests, were ignominiously discomfited and defeated. The sincere and believing heart of God's prophet rejoiced with exceeding joy; for in the plain and uncultured service just rendered he had had the approbation not only of an enlightened conscience, but also of a good God. Old Scotia's bard sang tersely and truthfully when he declared with poetic fervour—

"The heart aye's the part aye
That makes us right or wrang."

No doubt the prophet found himself in the minority, and within earshot of the vengeful threats of Jezebel. But God was with him, and having God upon his side, he had more with him than all that could be against him.

Our cultured friends tell us that the introduction of hymns and organs into the services of the sanctuary is chiefly with a view to the "brightening" of these services. Brightening them for whom? Is the aim here man-pleasing or God-pleasing? If God be in the services, there is no need of humanly-invented appliances, for "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." If God be not in the service, because, forsooth, it is not in accordance with His own appointment or contrary to His command and will, songs and solos, scraps of trashy poetry, the thundering bursts of an organ, and even lighted candles on the altar (so-called), will fail to brighten the services. They must have but a poor appreciation of God's attributes and perfections who imagine that His word and works, His worship and His ordinances, can be improved and perfected and "brightened," as they call it, by man's puny and presumptuous interferences to make them more acceptable to the creature. The "higher critics" imagine that, with prying eyes, they have detected faults and failings and serious defects in the *word* of God; and similar eyes, in the coming time, may subject the *works* of God to the same condemnation. The countenance of the moon, to wit, may be sorely criticised for the specks and spots, and even blotches, that have disfigured it too long! And who knows but that, in the coming time, when aerostation and civil engineering have arrived at perfection, some of our "higher critics" and bolder "innovators" may venture upon a lunatic voyage to wash the moon's face, just by the way of "brightening her services"? An enterprise of that kind may be "in nubibus" as yet; but it is no harm to say that, if it be moonshine that is to guide our "critics" and "innovators" in the future, as in the past, then it is all the better to have it up-to-date!

But apart from all quasi-levity or irony, allow me to say, in conclusion, that man's presumption in all ages has been a great source of offence to both God and men. It is ever bent upon having its own way, and cares little about the views and feelings and claims of others. It seems to take but little heed of the great principle that the divine Master has laid down to be regulative in all our worship, viz., "Whatsoever I have commanded you." Where the gratification of "the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the

pride of life" are antagonistic to the Master's "command", the selfish principle wins the day; and the Master's command is either ignored or wilfully disobeyed. In this matter of pleasing self and hunting after novelties, in bowing and wheeling and crouching and attitudinizing, the clergy of all the fashionable Churches are the chief offenders. Innovating clerics of less pretentious Churches, though they do not attach much consequence as yet to vestments and crosses and candles and altars, yet they are away from the inspired basis both in doctrine and worship, and are hastening on after the "advance guard" by easy stages, according as the laity are able to bear it. Clericalism and sacerdotalism ever aim at supremacy; and they never fail to curse and ruin either Church or State where they gain the ascendancy. The laity can be led a certain length by clerical influence in the pursuit of novelty and style and fashion, but in the main the views and convictions and principles of the laity of the Evangelical Churches are sound and orthodox and consistent. We long for the time when these laymen of solid sense and Protestant principle will come to the protection and rescue of the truth in all their several communions, and will say to the Innovators, Ritualists, and Romanizers, Let us have done with all this "tomfoolery," for which we have not a particle of Divine sanction, and let us return at once and for ever to Gospel truth in all its simplicity and purity. Then purity, peace, and piety shall reign in all our borders, the earth shall yield her increase, and God, even our God, will bless us, both for time and for eternity.

PRAISE—Psalm 93. BENEDICTION.

WEDNESDAY, 6th AUGUST.

AFTERNOON MEETING, from 3 till 5 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN :—

MR. ARCHIBALD M'NEILAGE, Glasgow, Scotland.

PRAISE—Psalm 25, 4-10 (1st version).

Rev. Thomas Matthew, Kilwinning, Scotland, led in prayer.

Chairman's Address :—

Ladies and Gentlemen—Shall I not say, children of the stock of the Second Reformation, gathered from many lands with one common object, and hastening unto one glorious hope, we are met this afternoon to resume the work of the Conference of Psalm-singers. I take it that I have been asked to occupy this position not out of personal compliment, but out of compliment to the denomination with which I am connected—the Free Church of Scotland, in its sadly broken and small form.

Let me make one or two observations on what I conceive to be our object here. Last week I read in the *British Weekly*, in the remarks of the Irish correspondent of that omniscient journal, that the "Purity" Party intended to hold a Conference in Belfast next week. I liked the word—I like it very much, indeed—but I am painfully conscious of our inability to live up to it. It is an excellent thing that even those who do not agree with us in our arguments and our contentions for the exclusive use of the Psalms in the Service of Praise—it is an excellent tribute to us that they do not hesitate to call us the "Purity" Party. I recollect that Scripture speaks of purity being one of the highest virtues of the Christian life, and if we are only able, friends, in our walk and conversation in the world to live up to what the world is willing to concede to us

in our matter of worship, then we need not be ashamed of our title, but rather rejoice and glorify God on this behalf.

Now, I have asked myself several times—Why is it that I prefer to have the Psalms exclusively as the medium of praise in the worship of the sanctuary? And more than once it has occurred to me that if our argument were only with those who advocate hymns as an addition to the Psalmody, we have a very short and easy method with them in their own admissions. It is admitted by those who advocate the introduction of hymns as an addition to the Psalter, that nothing will ever be equal to the Psalms. They give it forth with great gusto, and you would think they never would seek anything else as long as they breathe; but as a matter of fact, we know that even in spite of that great eulogy of Dr. Whyte on the Psalms —quoted by Dr. Petticrew this forenoon—the singing of Psalms in Free St. George's is more honoured in the breach than in the observance; and, therefore, when we hear men praising the Psalms in that way, we may find our justification in their own admission, viz., that the Psalms are the best.

Previous to the break-up in the Free Church, I several times was called on to take part in Temperance work in Churches where hymns were sung. I invariably used the Psalms only, and sometimes the conductor of the Psalmody entered an objection. Being an amiable kind of man, I asked him what objection could he have to singing Psalms. He admitted nothing could beat the Psalms, that they were the best; and I said, "My good fellow, why then should you be content with a second best? If you go to buy a suit of clothes from your tailor, and he offers you a first-class suit at £5, and a second-class suit at the same price, would'nt you be an idiot if you took anything but the best?" And so with the singing of God's praises. The Psalms are admittedly the best; we should, therefore, use nothing else.

But there is another thing: besides being the best, they are the safest. With all respect even to the most excellent hymnologists, like the late Dr. Bonar and many others, I prefer the Holy Spirit; and with all respect to John Bunyan and "The Pilgrim's Progress," it is better to preach out of the Bible than "The Pilgrim's Progress." However much we may admire—and I hope we all do—such religious songs as have proceeded from the pens of Bonar and others, we do not in the least depreciate them when we say that, much as we love Bonar and Newton and Toplady and Cowper and the rest, He Who made them what they were, as trophies of grace, is a safer guide in the Church's Psalmody than they.

Then the last observation I have to make, as justifying the exclusive use of the Psalms, is that the Psalms are the

strongest spiritual food. We do not feed our children always on sweetmeats. On the contrary, if we have any good sense, we feed them on "wholesome parritch, chief of Scotland's food;" and the difference between the Psalms and the best hymns that have ever been written is as the difference, only more so, between the porridge for making bones and the "pastries" of the bakers. We have a large number of children in Glasgow who are badly afflicted with rickets. You would see them going about town with bandy-legs and legs all out of shape; and you ask the reason. The one reason is that they don't use the wholesome porridge that we used to do; and the other reason is, if you will look at the children's teeth you will find, that they are all wasted with eating sweetmeats—and that is what happens spiritually to the Churches that abandon the Psalms and go in for feasting themselves on the sweetmeats of the hymns. They become spiritually rickety; there is not a straight limb in them; and they are of no use to fight the battle for the truth.

There is another thing about it, friends; Dr. Petticrew just hinted at it this forenoon. He said—and said rightly—that there is no hymn-book in existence which has not over it the trail of Arminianism. Nay, more than that. Regarding the "Church Hymnary," when the vote was put in committee for the retention of one of the Calvinistic hymns—the hymn beginning with, "Sovereign grace o'er sin abounding"—there was only one voice in the committee for its retention; and more than that, when the vote was put for the retention of M'Cheyne's hymn, "I once was a stranger to grace and to God," &c., it was lost, and M'Cheyne's hymn is banished from the "Church Hymnary." What other proof do you wish in support of the statement that the trail of Arminianism is over every hymn-book that ever was compiled? Therefore, if we are to be strong Christians like as our fathers were, it will be by drinking, as they drank, from the wells of salvation in the Songs of Zion, which, as you shall hear this afternoon, have been the imperishable Songs of the Church in all ages, showing the unity of the Body of Christ and the adaptability of the truth as it is in Jesus to all nations, to all climes, to all ranks, to all languages, and not by breaking up that glorious unity by innumerable sectional hymn-books, the creation of men's fancies and phantoms, filled with vapid sentimentalism, in place of the power and strength of the Holy Spirit.

One other remark and I am done. Do those of you who are Psalm-singers do justice to the Psalter? In my humble opinion we do not. There is one Church represented here—the U.P. Church of America—which, I believe, is striving more than others to do justice to the Psalter. They have a

far greater variety of translations, varieties of metres, than any other Church that adheres to Psalm-singing, and the United Presbyterian Church of America is wise in its generation in that. We ought to make far more use in the Service of Praise of the variety of metres, even such as we have. That is my view; and I do think we oftentimes do an injustice to the Psalter by restricting ourselves in another way. Some men will not sing the 109th Psalm, they will not sing what are known as the "Imprecatory" Psalms. Do we know better than the Holy Spirit what we should sing? Whatever may be in accordance with the subject of the discourse to be preached, by all means sing the Psalms that are relative to the subject; and, whether men hear or forbear, rest assured the Holy Spirit knows best how to safeguard His Own Word, and how to send it home to the hearts and consciences of those who hear.

THE PSALMS IN THE JEWISH CHURCH.*

By REV. LOUIS MEYER, Hopkinton, Iowa, U.S.A.

It will not be denied by anyone who believes in the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures that the Book of Psalms was given to the Jewish Church to be sung in the public and solemn worship of God, so that we can limit our discussion to "*the actual use of the Psalms in the early Jewish Church.*"

Our subject is a subject of peculiar difficulty, since the Word of God is silent concerning the use of the Psalms under the Jewish dispensation, making merely the statement that they were sung, and since even Jewish tradition is very limited touching this important point. The tracts, Tamid and Middoth, give a little information, and scattered through the Talmud are brief notices which have been woven into longer accounts, more or less truthful, by Jewish and Christian scholars. (See a brief list of literature at the close.) We will try to give a plain, unvarnished account of the little we know of the actual use of the Psalms in the Jewish Church before and about the time of Christ.

It has been rightly supposed that the system of praise was really commenced in the wilderness soon after the Tabernacle was set up, for the 90th Psalm, addressed by Moses, the man of God, to the eternal Jehovah, Who so wondrously preserved

* Read by Rev. Professor James Dick, M.A., D.D., Belfast, Ireland.

and led the people in the wilderness, was undoubtedly sung in the solemn assemblies of the people of Israel, when those of the original congregation who had reached that limit of life to which they had been restricted, were cut off suddenly "as with a flood," by pestilence, by the sword, by the fire, by the yawning of earth to swallow them up, and their bones whitened the desert sand.

There are some other Psalms whose language points to the remotest time of Israel's existence, and which are not assigned to any sacred writer by name, and we hesitate not to accept the suggestion that these Psalms were used by God's people in His worship during the periods before the days of David. And further, it is very possible that the Canon of Holy Scripture does not contain the majority of the inspired Psalms used in the worship of the early days of the Jewish dispensation.

The Psalms of David, Asaph, and the Psalmists of the later times were composed primarily and specially for the service of the Temple, where the worship was liturgical in a certain sense, for certain Psalms were sung on certain days and occasions, while the majority of the Psalms were used *ad libitum*.

We find occasionally the phrase, "hymns of the Temple," employed by Jewish scholars, but there is no doubt that all "hymns of the Temple" were Psalms.

As we look over the Book of Psalms, we are struck with the appropriateness of certain Psalms to certain occasions and certain parts of the worship, and we may take as granted that these Psalms were used as stated songs, although the Talmud does not mention them. Thus there are Psalms appropriate to the entrance of the worshippers into the Temple; to the pictorial scenes of substitution, imputation, sacrifice, and intercession; to the faith, the joyous emotions, the hopes, the thanksgivings, the prayers, and the praises in which the service culminates; Psalms of didactic, historical, commemorative, and of predictive import; Psalms expressive of the experience of individual believers, of penitential confessions and deprecations, of personal afflictions, conflicts, and reliefs, of praises and thanksgiving; Psalms relating to national calamities and deliverances; and Psalms of prayer and thanksgiving by the Church.

The time allotted to this paper is too short to permit more than a brief mention of the Psalms which are said to have been used as stated songs on certain days and occasions.

The Psalms said to have been used at the daily sacrifice were the following:—On the first day of the week, Psalm 24 was sung, because on that day God made the world and possessed it as its Maker; on the second day of the week

Psalm 48 was sung, because on that day the Lord divided the waters and reigned over them; on the third day, Psalm 82 was sung, because on that day the earth appeared, and being established by His wisdom, God placed it under His righteous government; on the fourth day, Psalm 94 was sung, because on that day God made the sun, moon, and stars, and will surely take vengeance on all who worship them; on the fifth day, Psalm 81 was sung, because of the variety of creatures made on that day to praise the name of God; on the sixth day, Psalm 93 was used, because on that day God finished His works and made man who can praise God; and on the seventh day, the Jewish Sabbath, Psalm 92 was sung, which is entitled, "A Song for the Sabbath Day," and Psalms 9, 104, and 118 are mentioned as additional songs for the Sabbath Day.

On the eve of the Passover, during the killing of the lamb, the Egyptian, or Lesser Hallel was sung, which comprised Psalms 113 to 118, and, according to the Tulmud, recorded five things:—"the coming out of Egypt, the dividing of the sea, the giving of the law, the resurrection of the dead, and the lot of the Messiah." This Hallel was sung also on the Feast of Pentecost, and on each of the eight days of the Feasts of Tabernacles and of the Dedication of the Temple. It was also repeated during the Passover supper where Psalms 113 and 114 were sung before the drinking of the second cup, while Psalms 115, 116, 117, and 118 were sung over the fourth cup, and thus closed the supper. Wolff mentions a curious tradition that those could partake of a fifth cup who would sing the "Great Hallel" over it, which comprised Psalms 120 to 136.

During the eight days of the Feast of Tabernacles the Egyptian Hallel was used, as stated above, and special Psalms were sung at the drink-offering after the festive sacrifices. Thus, Psalm 105 was sung on the first day of the feast; Psalm 29 on the second; Psalm 50, 16-23 on the third; Psalm 94, 16-23 on the fourth; Psalm 94, 8-23 on the fifth; Psalm 81, 6-16 on the sixth; Psalm 82, 5-8 on the seventh day.

On the Feast of Trumpets, Psalm 81 was sung during the drink-offering, and Psalm 29 was sung at the evening sacrifice.

We cannot stop here to picture the scenes at the services of the Jewish Church with all their beauties and luxuries, but we must stop a moment to consider how the Psalms were sung in the worship of the Jewish Church. The Rabbis repeat again and again that the real service of praise in the Temple was only with the voice, and modern Jewish scholars have tried to bring to light again the plain and simple, yea, almost monotonous tunes used in the service of song.

The Psalms at the daily sacrifices were divided into three parts, and a considerable pause was made between the first and the second, and between the second and the third. The signal for commencing the song was given by priests sounding their trumpets.

The chief musician apparently set the Psalms to music and taught the performers, for in the titles prefixed to numerous Psalms terms are used to signify the air, whether grave, cheerful, or joyous; the variety of performance by all the voices and instruments, by choruses, single voices, responses, etc.

A considerable number of Psalms contain decisive internal evidence in their interrogatory and responsive structure, and in their changes of subject and person, that they were originally adapted to be sung in that manner. The nature and significance of the services of which they were sung as accompaniments required this method; and a like practice of responses and choruses prevailed prior to the erection of the Temple (Exodus 15; Judges 5).

The singing in the first Temple was congregational (1 Chron. 16, 36), while at the laying of the foundation of the Temple the singing seems to have been antiphonal, the two choirs afterwards singing in unison in the Temple itself. In the second Temple female singers were employed (Ezra 2, 65), whose place was taken by Levite boys in the Temple of Herod.

The service of song commenced when the daily drink-offering was poured out upon the foundation of the altar. The steps which led to the east gate of the Temple, at which the worshippers were to enter, were fifteen in number, and each was thirty or more feet in length. A division of vocal and instrumental musicians is supposed to have occupied the extreme right, and another division the extreme left of those steps, the king a position at the top, near the threshold of the gate, and the high priest with a corps of singers a position in front of the lower step, while the procession of worshippers passed up towards the gate. During the passage of the procession the songs of degrees were sung. At its close the singers around the high priest took their station around and near the altar; and those on the right and left wings took their stations on the right and left sides of the outer sanctuary.

It must have been a striking and impressive scene, as after the daily sacrifice the Levites and the people united in the song of praise, at the termination of which the worshippers descended into the city to engage in their daily task.

We must, however, not think that the use of the Psalms before the time of Christ was confined to public worship. Psalm 134 was used every night by the different divisions of

the watch in the Temple. One watch addressed the other, reminding them of their duty, and the second watch answered by a solemn blessing. The whole Psalm was sung aloud at stated intervals to notify the time of night.

In the days of Jehoshaphat the Psalms were sung in battle (2 Chron. 20, 21), and Psalms were always sung in triumphal marches or processions. Judas Maccabaeus "sang Psalms with a loud voice," as he led his soldiers against the army of Gorgias, the governor of Idumea.

The Psalms have thus "furnished the battle songs, the pilgrim marches, the penitential prayers, and the public praises" to the Jewish Church. And "in palace halls, by happy hearths, in squalid rooms, in prison cells, in crowded sanctuary, in lonely wilderness—everywhere they have uttered the song of triumph and the moan of contrition, the tearful complaints, and the wrestling, conquering prayer" of God's people in ancient times, as they are uttering now, and will continue to utter until the end of time.

Brief List of Literature.

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3. *Wolff*, Bibliotheca Hebraea. Hamburgh, 1715-33. 4 vol.
4. *Lightfoot*, Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae.
5. *Koecher*, Nova Bibliotheca Hebraea. Jenae, 1783.
6. *Hiawatsch*, The Jewish Year. Reichenberg, 1887.
7. *Duschak*, History of the Jewish Service. Mannheim, 1866.
8. *Rothschild*, The Jewish Service in its Historical and Critical Development. Abzey, 1870.
9. *Dessauer*, The Service Explained. Budapest, 1878.
10. *Singer*, The Tunes of the Traditional Service of Praise. Vienna, 1886.
11. *Saalschütz*, History of Music among the Hebrews.
12. *Clokey*, David's Harp in Song and Story. Pittsburg, 1896.
13. *Lord*, The Psalter Re-adjusted in its relations to the Temple Service and the ancient Jewish faith. New York, 1860.
14. *Edersheim*, The Temple, Its Ministry and Services, as they were at the time of Jesus Christ. New York, 1874.
15. *Lightfoot*, De Ministerio Templi.
16. *Brown*, *Prideaux*, *Nevin*, *Frazier*, *Wuensche*, *Oehler*, and all books on Jewish Antiquities deal with the use of the Psalms in the Temple services more or less thoroughly, as do also all *Cyclopaedias* (Biblical or other) and all *histories of the Jews.*

NOTE.—1, in Hebrew; 2, 3, 4, 5, 15, in Latin; 6 to 11 in German; 12, 13, 14, in English.

THE PSALMS IN THE APOSTOLIC AND EARLY CHURCH.*

By REV. WILLIAM WISHART, D.D.,
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Various opinions have been entertained with respect to the Psalmody of the Apostolic and Early Church. One is, that hymns of human composition were exclusively employed as the matter of praise in the early Church during the first three centuries of our era, that the Psalms of inspiration were not introduced into the worship of the Christian Church till the fourth century, and that they were then introduced in subservience to the Arian heresy.

This strange opinion seems to have been developed and formulated in the controversy which arose from the introduction of Dr. Watts' hymns and his imitation of the Psalms in the worship of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in the latter part of the eighteenth century. A number of Presbyterian ministers became zealous advocates not only of this change or innovation, but also of the reason given by Dr. Watts for the rejection of the Psalms and the substitution of human hymns and imitations in their place. Hence they affirmed that the Psalms of David are now without Divine appointment and utterly unfit for the worship of God under the present dispensation. They maintained that when the Apostle exhorted the Colossian Christians thus: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly . . . in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord," he, by the phrase, "word of Christ," referred exclusively to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed in the New Testament, and by "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs", he intended hymns of human composition that were derived from and founded upon this word of Christ, or the Gospel as revealed in the New Testament. And they endeavoured to prove—though, as we think, with ill success—that these hymns of human composition thus authorized by the Apostle, were the only matter of praise in the early Church until the fourth century of our era, when through the prevailing influence of the Arian heresy the Psalms of David were introduced into the worship of the Christian Church.†

Again, another opinion is that hymns of human composition and the Psalms of inspiration were both employed as the matter of praise in the early Church in the time of the Apostles

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* Read by Rev. Edward M'Fadden, D.D., Hamilton, Ohio, U.S.A.

† See McMaster on the Psalms, pages 30-34 and 156.

as well as after their death. Hence it is inferred that hymns of human composition, as well as the inspired Psalms, have the sanction of Apostolic authority. This is the opinion generally maintained by the advocates of human hymns at the present time.

And again, another opinion is that the inspired Psalms were employed exclusively in the early Church not only in the time of the Apostles, but also for some time after their death, when the Church had to a great extent fallen from her primitive and Apostolic purity both in doctrine and worship.

In this discussion we may well ignore the first opinion. We believe it has very few, if any, advocates at the present time. The real controversy now is between the second and third opinions: Were hymns of human composition, as well as the Psalms of inspiration, employed as the matter of praise in the early Church during the time of the Apostles as well as after their death? or, were the Psalms of inspiration employed exclusively in the early Church until some time after the death of the Apostles? We have no hesitancy in denying the former, and affirming the latter of these propositions.

I. We shall turn our attention to the Psalmody of the early Church during that period in which she was under the government and guidance of the inspired Apostles. That the Psalms of inspiration were employed exclusively as the matter of praise in the early Church during this period will appear from such considerations as the following:—

1. The first converts to Christianity were generally Jews. It is probable that they formed the nucleus of all, or nearly all, the Christian congregations that were organized not only in Jerusalem, but also in the other cities throughout the Roman empire; and they would naturally bring their songs of Zion with them into the worship of the Christian Church. In other words, they would naturally continue to use the same inspired songs by which they had so long been accustomed to celebrate the praises of God. And that they actually did so is admitted by all candid and intelligent advocates of human hymns.

2. The inspired writers of the New Testament refer in various places to certain songs that were then employed as the matter of praise in the Church, just as they refer to certain Scriptures that were then employed as the matter of instruction and rule of obedience in the Church. Now as these Scriptures could not have been any other than the inspired Scriptures of the Old Testament, so these songs certainly could not have been any other than the inspired songs contained in the Old Testament. They could not have been derived from and founded upon the Gospel as revealed in the

New Testament, because they were already in existence while the New Testament was being revealed. They are called by the same names which were employed to designate the inspired Psalms in the Septuagint or Greek version of the Old Testament, viz., Psalms, Hymns, and Songs; and the same verbs are used to express the singing of them which were employed to express the singing of the inspired Psalms by the Levites under the former dispensation, namely, the verb, *Psallo*, which signifies to sing psalms, and the verb, *Humneo*, which signifies to sing hymns. See Psalms 9, 2, and 105, 2; 1 Chron. 16, 8; and 2 Chron. 29, 30, Septuagint version. Our Lord and His Apostles sang some of these inspired Psalms, when they are said to have sung a hymn at the conclusion of the first supper (Matt. 26, 30). Paul and Silas sang them, when they are said to have prayed and sung hymns unto God at midnight in the prison at Philippi (Acts 16, 25). Paul declares that he will sing them, when he says, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (1 Cor. 14, 15). And James exhorts those Christians to whom he wrote his epistle to give expression to their spiritual joy by singing these inspired songs—"Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (James 5, 13).

Now while the Apostles themselves sang these inspired songs and exhorted other Christians to sing them, they composed no other songs, nor did they authorize any other person to do so. And if we should admit that the inspired Apostles could have authorized some uninspired man to compose songs of praise for the use of the Church, and could have placed such songs in the same category with the inspired Psalms as the matter of praise to God—a supposition too absurd to be believed—still there is no evidence that they did so. Concerning the existence of any other songs in the time of the Apostles, besides those inspired songs which already existed in the Old Testament, the New Testament is absolutely and profoundly silent, as are also all the records of history.

3. Many of the Jewish converts to Christianity were characterized by a tenacious and zealous attachment to the rites, forms, and customs of their forefathers. It was owing to this fact that the abrogation of the rite of circumcision and of some other ceremonial observances caused no little contention and agitation for some time in the Apostolic Church. And if any change or innovation had been introduced into the Psalmody of the Church, either by way of substitution or addition, we have reason to believe that the same effect would have followed. But the fact is, that on the subject of Psalmody, peace and tranquility universally

prevailed, both in the time of the Apostles and for some time after their death.

II. We shall now turn our attention to the Psalmody of the early Church after the time of the Apostles; and if the early or primitive period of the Christian Church be viewed as extending down to the beginning of the fifth century, then we admit that hymns of human composition were employed as the matter of praise in the early Church during this period, but we deny that they were employed at such a time and under such circumstances and conditions as to imply any Divine appointment or Divine approbation. The advocates of human hymns have put forth their utmost efforts to prove that hymns of human composition were employed in the Christian Church as early as the beginning of the second century, only a few years after the death of the last Apostle. And although the sentiment and practice of the Church after the time of the Apostles cannot in themselves, apart from the Word of God, be an authoritative factor in determining what is lawful and what is unlawful in the worship of God; yet we admit that if it could be proved that hymns of human composition were employed in the worship of God immediately after the death of the Apostles, while the fathers who had been associated with them and taught by them were still alive, and before the Church had fallen from the simplicity and purity of the Apostolic period, this fact would militate strongly against the truth of our position. But after some examination of the subject, we are free to affirm that this supposed fact has not been, and, we believe, cannot be, proved.

We shall, then, as briefly as possible, notice some of the reasons that are usually offered, in order to prove that hymns of human composition were used as the matter of praise in the Church immediately after the death of the Apostles.

1. The advocates of human hymns almost invariably appeal to the testimony of Pliny, the pro-consul of Bithynia, in his letter to the Emperor Trajan, near the beginning of the second century. Our answer is, that Pliny bears no testimony whatever on the point in dispute. He declares that the Bithynian Christians "were accustomed to meet on a certain day before daylight, and to sing a song to Christ as a god." But whether this song was an inspired Psalm contained in the Old Testament or a song composed by some Christian poet, he does not say.

2. Another reason is taken from the case of Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch, and a well-known anti-trinitarian. He was charged not only with grave heresy, but also with gross immorality, and was deposed from his office by a council

of seventy bishops, about A.D. 269; and a part of the charge on the ground of which he was condemned and deposed was as follows:—"That he put a stop to the Psalms in honour of our Lord Jesus Christ as modern, and the compositions of modern men, and trained women to sing psalms on the great day of Easter in honour of himself." Now, in the interpretation of this passage the advocates of human hymns take the little word *as (hos)* in the sense of "because", and affirm that the Psalms to which Paul put a stop were hymns of human composition, and that Paul abolished the use of them, *because* they were modern and the compositions of modern men, and that he trained his female choir to sing the old inspired Psalms in honour of himself. That is, Paul set aside the modern hymns which contained ascriptions of praise to Jesus Christ, and substituted in their stead the old inspired Psalms which contained ascriptions of praise not to Jesus Christ, but to Paul himself. Now, without stopping to notice the palpable absurdities which are involved in this interpretation, let me say that the particle, *hos*, when followed, as it is in the Greek text of the passage under consideration, by a noun in the accusative case cannot be taken in the sense of the conjunction *because*. The grammatical construction absolutely forbids it. This particle, as commonly used in the Greek language, is an adverb of comparison, and is translated in the New Testament generally by the English word *as*, and also sometimes by the words *as though*. See Acts 23, 15, and 27, 30; Rom. 4, 17. And this is evidently its meaning in the passage under consideration. Hence we affirm that the Psalms in honour of our Lord Jesus Christ, to which Paul put a stop, were the inspired Psalms of the Old Testament; and the sin, on account of which he was deposed, consisted in the fact that he set aside these sacred Psalms *as though* they had been modern psalms and the compositions of modern men—that is, merely hymns of human composition; and, also, in the fact that he trained his female choir to sing psalms that had been composed especially to honour himself and to celebrate his own praise. "He was delighted," says Neander, "to receive the incense of exaggerated expressions about himself, in poems and declamations, in holy places, and to be called, in bombastic and rhetorical phrases, an angel sent down from heaven."

3. Again, another reason is founded upon an extract preserved by Eusebius, from an anonymous work which was written against the heresy of Artemon, a notorious opponent of the Divinity of Jesus Christ. This work is now generally ascribed to a certain Roman presbyter, by the name of Caius, and it seems to have been written at Rome about A.D. 230.

Now, there is one passage in this extract to which the advocates of human hymns often appeal. Bingham, in particular, refers to it, in order to prove that human hymns were employed in the worship of the Church from the beginning of the present dispensation. He says, "That ancient author in Eusebius, who wrote against the heresy of Artemon, among other arguments, urges this, for one: 'That from the beginning there were Psalms and hymns composed by the brethren, and written by the faithful, setting forth the praises of Christ as the Word of God, and declaring the Divinity of His person.'" But Bingham often translates his original authorities very loosely and inaccurately, and so makes them say what he wants them to say.

The following is a literal and accurate translation of the Greek text:—"And how many Psalms and songs of the brethren, transcribed by faithful men, from the beginning, praise Christ as the Word of God by ascribing Divinity to Him." Now, we have no hesitancy in affirming that there is a reference in this passage simply to the Psalms of inspiration: (1) Because we have here the very names by which the inspired Psalms are so frequently designated, many of them being called both Psalms and songs. (2) The followers of Jesus, as a distinct and peculiar class of people, were in primitive times, not called Christians, but *brethren*; and of course the Psalms and songs which they employed in the worship of God would be called the Psalms and songs of the brethren, in order to distinguish them from the songs which the heathen employed in their idolatrous worship. But this language does not imply that these Psalms and songs were *composed* by *the brethren*, and no such idea is contained in the passage. They are not said to have been composed by the brethren from the beginning, as Bingham has it, but to have been *transcribed*, *written*, or *copied* by *the faithful*—that is, faithful scribes—from the beginning; and this is literally true of the inspired Psalms. (3) The inspired Psalms do most emphatically praise Jesus Christ as the Word of God by ascribing Divinity to Him, and were so understood and explained by the fathers in the early Church. In confirmation of our position here, we beg leave to refer to a note of Dr. A. C. M'Giffert, author of the late translation of Eusebius, under the editorial supervision of Dr. Philip Schaff. On the passage under consideration Dr. M'Giffert gives the following note:—"This passage is sometimes interpreted as indicating that hymns written by the Christians themselves were sung in the Church at Rome at this time. But this is by no means implied. So far as we are able to gather from our sources, nothing but the Psalms and New Testament hymns (such as

the Gloria in Excelsis, the Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis, etc.), were as a rule sung in public worship before the fourth century. The practice which had sprung up in the Church at Antioch seems to have been exceptional."

Now I need not say that Dr. M'Giffert is one of the most eminent Church historians of the present day, and being himself a hymn-singer, he certainly cannot be charged with any bias or prejudice against the use of human hymns in the worship of God. Yet he here testifies, "that nothing except the Psalms and New Testament hymns were, as a rule, sung in public worship before the fourth century," and let it be remembered that these New Testament hymns to which Dr. M'Giffert refers were *inspired hymns*. There were certain verses in the New Testament which were sung or chanted in the worship of God without any human additions or modifications, at least until the latter part of the fourth century. But to this testimony of Dr. M'Giffert, we may add the testimony of the great historian Neander in proof of the same fact. In his history of the Church during the sixth century he writes as follows:—"Besides the Psalms which had been used from the earliest times, and the short doxologies and hymns consisting of verses from the Holy Scriptures, spiritual songs composed by distinguished Church teachers, such as Ambrose of Milan, and Hilary of Poictiers, were also introduced among the pieces used for public worship in the Western Church. To this last named practice much opposition, it is true, was expressed. It was demanded that, in conformity with ancient usage, nothing should be used in the music of public worship, but what was taken from the sacred Scriptures."

It is not, indeed, denied that previous to the fourth century hymns of human composition were employed in the worship of God by some who professed to be Christians. It is well known that as early as the latter part of the second century, Bardesanes, a man of talent, who belonged to the Gnostic sect, and so was a zealous opponent of the doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, composed hymns and used them in the Syrian Church as a means of teaching and propagating his heretical opinions. But if Bardesanes and his followers are to be regarded as a part of the visible Church, it is evident that their conduct in this respect was singular and exceptional. It does not prove that human hymns were, at that period, employed in public worship by evangelical Churches and evangelical Christians, but rather the contrary. And far less does it prove that there was any Apostolic appointment or Divine sanction of the use of such hymns.

And the same thing may be said with regard to the conduct

of Paul of Samosata, in the following century. He was also a zealous opponent of the doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus, and he abolished the use of the old inspired Psalms in the Church of Antioch, as though they had been no more divine and sacred than the compositions of modern men; and he introduced hymns of human composition in their place, in order to teach and propagate his own heretical opinions, and to gratify his own ambitious and vainglorious spirit. But his conduct and that of his followers in this respect was singular and exceptional, and, indeed, constituted a part of the charge on the ground of which he was deposed from his office by a council of orthodox bishops.

We are then led to the conclusion that the Psalms of inspiration were employed exclusively as the matter of praise in the early Church, during the time of the Apostles and for some time after their death, when errors and corruptions had to a great extent crept into the Church. This conclusion might be strengthened and confirmed by other lines of argument which we cannot at present pursue within the space to which this paper must be confined. Let any honest enquirer after truth examine the writings of the primitive fathers, such as Tertullian, Jerome, Cyril, Augustine, Cassian, and others, and he will find that the evidence from this source is in harmony with the conclusion at which we have arrived, and that much of it is incompatible with the supposition that human hymns were used in worship during the time of the Apostles or soon after their death, or that they were ever used with Divine approbation. Is there no significance in the fact that no hymn of human composition now in existence can be traced back to the time of the Apostles, and that the earliest hymn now extant is that of Clement, composed about one hundred years after the death of the last Apostle, and evidently not intended to be sung in the praise of God, but to be read for edification. If human hymns were used in the Apostolic and early Church, what has become of them? If, as Bingham and others maintain, Ignatius, who suffered martyrdom under Trajan, about A.D. 107, was the author of hymns as well as epistles, why is it that the latter have been preserved to the present time, but the former have perished? Would not the hymns of such an eminent saint and heroic martyr, who was known and admired by the whole Church, have been preserved as precious mementoes in after ages, if they had ever existed? But the fact is, there is no adequate evidence to prove that they ever existed. I must, however, forbear. I cannot, at present, enter into the consideration of the Psalmody of the Church during the Mediæval period. Indeed, I have been able to do but little more than to give a brief and imperfect

outline of the arguments that may be derived from the history of the Apostolic and early Church in favour of the exclusive use of the inspired Psalter. But I must not add, lest I trespass upon the time of the Conference.

May our Heavenly Father Who has graciously given the inspired Psalter to His Church, as the all-sufficient and only manual of praise in His worship, also give to His Church and people the wisdom and grace to receive and use this Psalter according to the manifest will and design of Him Who has graciously given it!

PRAISE—Psalm 99, 5-9.

BRIEF ADDRESSES.

Rev. Dr. Corkey, Glendermot, Londonderry, Ireland, in discussing **"The Psalms in the Reformed Churches on the Continent, and in the Early Scottish Church, up to the time of the Westminster Assembly,"** said—Before the Reformation there was, practically, no congregational song in the Church of Rome. There was singing; but it was confined entirely to choirs of monks and, I suppose, nuns. The voice of the people was not heard in the Church of Rome in praises at all. All the Reformers, as is well known, gave much attention to the subject of congregational song. They prepared translations of the Psalms—metrical translations—in the language of the people, and they cultivated song with the greatest care. This is true of the great leaders whose names are familiar—Luther, Calvin, and Knox. Luther had the Psalms translated into the language of the people, and encouraged the practice of congregational song. It is true—and with this remark I may pass from the Lutheran Church—that hymns were early introduced, just as there were other corruptions retained in it, to its lasting injury. But it was otherwise with the Churches founded by the Presbyterian Reformers. Calvin gave great attention to the subject of congregational song, and he prepared, as is well known, a Psalter; and in the preface he says, "Searching all round, we find no songs better and more suitable for praise than the Psalms of David, which the Holy Spirit dictated and gave to him." And in this Psalter there was practically nothing but the Psalms. It was introduced,

as is well known, into France, and was sung there; and the enthusiasm and passion with which the Huguenots sang these songs is a common-place of history. They sang them in their worship for generations, and they sang them when they went to the scaffold, as many of them did, to die for the name of the Lord Jesus. The first English Psalter emanated from Geneva, and it was first published there; and for more than two centuries after the Reformation no system of praise was set up to compete with the Psalter. Immediately after the Reformation, during the days of Knox, there are references to other compositions; but there is no doubt about this, that a Psalter was provided in the language of the people, and that that Psalter did not contain anything but the Psalms. Much has been made, as you know, out of some fugitive pieces and Scripture songs that were printed along with this Psalter in some editions; but it is an historical fact that, during the days of the great Knox, there was nothing whatever in the Scottish Psalter but the Psalms. It was not until his hand was lying in the grave that a few fugitive pieces were put in; and, in regard to these, there is no doubt whatever—it has been proven by Dr. Livingstone, who edited the Psalter of 1635, and examined the whole subject—that those pieces were inserted solely on the authority of the printer. There is no evidence whatever—I have looked over the whole question, if you will allow me to say so—that these were ever sung or sanctioned by the Church for use in worship. They were just like the four or five hymns that are ordinarily printed with the Bibles that are used in many of our churches, where a hymn is never sung. There has not been a line or a word ever adduced from any creed, any confession or directory, any book of order, or any book of discipline of the Reformed Presbyterian Churches prescribing or in any way sanctioning or authorizing the use of uninspired hymns. And there is no evidence whatever that these hymns, or any hymns, or anything outside the Psalter, were used in the best days of the Church of Scotland or at the time of the Second Reformation. The subject of song was not overlooked. It was provided for. It was in express terms prescribed in their Confession and in the Book of Common Order; but there was nothing else prescribed or appointed but the Psalms.

I pass on from that subject to refer to the use of the Psalms at the time of the Westminster Assembly. That Assembly had before it the subject of Psalmody. It considered it carefully, and sanctioned the Psalms for public use in worship. It had nothing else before it, and it sanctioned nothing else as the material of praise. When British Presbyterianism reorganised itself at the time of the Westminster Assembly,

and made what was believed to be—and was—a new start, there was nothing before the Assembly, or considered, or sanctioned except the Psalms. They were authorized, and they were accepted by the Church of Scotland; and in that Church for more than a century afterwards there was nothing in any way sanctioned in addition to the Psalms as material for praise. Hymns were introduced earlier into England, in the beginning of the eighteenth century. From reasons which we cannot dwell upon here, there was in that country a considerable decay and falling away in faith and vital godliness. Dr. Petticrew referred in the forenoon to the statement of Romaine, who wrote about the middle of the century, and who refers to the time when "the words of man get the preference in the Church above the Word of God, yea, so far as to exclude it entirely from public worship." What I call your attention to is that he says, "it is not difficult to account for this strange position. The people had lost sight of the meaning of the Psalms. They did not see their relation to Jesus Christ. This happened when vital religion began to decay among us more than a century ago." It was a gradual decay. Dr. Watts did much to introduce hymns. To make way for his own compositions he vilified and misrepresented the Psalms. Speaking of the Psalms, Watts uses such language as this, "Our Psalmody doth not only flat our devotion, but too often awakens our regret, and touches all the springs of uneasiness within us. Just when we are entering into an evangelical frame, the line which the clerk parcels out unto us hath something in it so extremely sourish and cloudy that it darkens our sight of God our Saviour. We are checked on a sudden in our ascent toward heaven by some expressions that are fit only to be sung in the worldly sanctuary. The harmony and the worship grow dull of necessity." There is much more to the same effect. Watts held and promulgated low views on the subject of inspiration which affected the interests of vital godliness in England, and have affected it to the present time. There is no doubt that the views that are still held concerning inspiration and some other doctrines in the Nonconformist Churches of England were set afloat by this man who has been styled the father of modern hymnology. He did more than any other individual to introduce hymns into the British Churches. Wherever an effort has been since made to supplant the Psalms, the diatribes and the misrepresentations of Watts and others are resorted to. It is a very significant thing that in every case where the Psalms of God have been put out of the Churches and hymns introduced, the grossest and the vilest misrepresentations and abuse have been heaped upon the Lord's songs. It is a necessity of the

position of the advocates of hymns that they should abuse and misrepresent the Psalms, because they are trying to bring in another book, and, of course, they can only do so on the plea that it is a better book than the one they are supplanting. Such are the pleas on which hymns were introduced into the British Churches; such are the pleas on which they are still retained.

Rev. Dr. Kerr, Glasgow, Scotland, said—A few years ago, I had the privilege to preside at a meeting in Jerusalem at the opening of a mission being established there for the Jews. The Psalms were used in the service. Those present were almost all English. In the course of a conversation with the missionary and his assistant, I found that they intended using hymns and not Psalms in their work, and I urged the use of the Psalms alone, saying, among other things, that the Jews could not object to the use of the Psalms as they were part of their own Old Testament Scriptures. As a result, the missionary agreed to use the Psalms. On returning home, I obtained two hundred copies of the Psalms in sheets, instructed the publishers to take out the Paraphrases, and the binders to bind them in strong cloth, and I sent them to Jerusalem, where they are still being used. But the idea I would like to emphasize here is this, that in the use of the Psalms of the Old Testament, the Jews and Gentiles have a splendid bond of union. By their frequent use of the Psalms the Jew will be led to see that the Christ their fathers crucified was the promised Messiah, and to accept the New Testament that tells of the Christ Who was ever honouring the Psalms. The Gentile Christians sing the Jewish Psalms in praise, and the Jewish Christians sing their own Psalms in praise, and both unite in the worship of their one Lord through the Psalter of inspiration; both peoples find Christ in the Psalms, and adore Him.

Much has been said to-day, and more will likely be said, about the use of the Psalms in pre-Reformation times. In the days of that Emperor of Rome, Julian the apostate, when the persecutions raged so fiercely—and none can persecute as bitterly as apostates, as none can attack the singers of the old Psalms as bitterly as those who have themselves departed from the Psalms—the Christians were fond of using such Psalms as breathed the very broadest spirit and predicted the period when Jew and Gentile would unite in praise to the God of heaven. One of their favourites was Psalm 96:—

> "O sing a new song to the Lord:
> Sing all the earth to God.
> To God sing, bless His name, shew still
> His saving health abroad."

And the arena and catacombs at Rome resounded with that song which, though a song of the Jews, is as full of a catholic spirit as any song could be. Under the iron heel of proud Pagan Rome, the saints of God could not be ground to powder so long as they could sing the songs of Zion; for these songs made their singers indomitable.

Reference has been made to the absence of Calvinism from the hymns. The Psalms are Calvinistic throughout; and their use by Luther, Calvin, and Knox explains how these Reformers were able to grapple with the Papacy and shake it to its centre. In the Psalms they found strong meat for their inward spirit, and powerful thoughts—the thoughts of God—to stimulate and fortify their minds. Hence they could burst the Arminian fetters of Rome—for Romanism is Arminianism to the core.

The force, even on the battlefield, of the Calvinistic system has been often visible; and to their use of these Calvinistic Psalms may be attributed in part the courage and endurance of our late foes in Southern Africa, for let us not, though the victors, withhold from the vanquished this acknowledgment, at least, of their valour. An observation by Mr. Gladstone, fifteen years ago, when similar hostilities were in process, deserves to be reproduced—"Of the settlers in South Africa, 8,000 were Dutch, men of a strong and muscular fibre, educated in that school of Calvinism which, whatever else may be said of it, made your ancestors a strong and determined race."

As to the introduction of hymns into the Church, some hymn-books are introduced in a regular manner, but often all order is ignored in the method of their introduction. They are sometimes introduced in a very questionable and dishonourable manner—not through the regular vote of a congregation or a denomination, but by the high-handed and arbitrary action of a session, or by the minister himself. When hymns climb up this other way, the same are thieves and robbers. Then, again, some are ready to employ all the hymn-books that make their appearance, for the Church is being deluged with hymnals and hymnals. A minister informed me yesterday that he was so liberal he could use any of the hymn-books—the Hymnal, or Hymnary, or Hymns Ancient and Modern, or the Methodist Hymn-book, or Sankey's Songs and Solos. I said he was very like a man I heard of, who had been apprehended on a charge of some petty offence, and when his lawyer had obtained from him information for his defence, he inquired of the prisoner what could be said on his behalf as to his character—had he been a member of any Church? The accused replied, "O yes! I was at first a

member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, then of the General Assembly, then of the United Free Church; but be sure to tell the judge," said he, "that I nivver tuk up long wi' ony o' them." Like the liberal hymn-book lovers, this poor man was afflicted with enlargement of the heart.

Letter from A. T. Niven, Esq., Edinburgh, Scotland, to Rev. Dr. Petticrew, one of the Secretaries:—

"16 Young Street,
Edinburgh, 30th July, 1902.

"My Dear Sir—I should have much desired to attend your interesting meetings at Belfast next week, and I had almost hoped to be able to take a holiday, in order to be present. But I must be in Edinburgh on the 7th, and it would not be worth while to go over on that night, merely to return again on the evening of the 8th, which I would require to do.

"I do trust, however, you may have a useful, as well as an interesting, meeting. Apart altogether from their more than doubtful use in public worship, we are simply wearied of these wretched hymns. They are taking away the whole strength and force from our service of praise; promoting a miserable sentimentalism, in place of robust manliness; and substituting for the "grave, sweet melody," which our fathers loved, poor musicians' airs, chiefly secular, many of which it is a positive shame to produce in a Presbyterian place of worship.

"If something could be done even to *limit* the use of hymns, it would be a step in the right direction. Except the ministers, every one you meet concurs in this. Ministers say they sing hymns because they suit their sermons. If this be true, it does not say much for the sermons; but my impression is, that it arises in great measure from laziness. Many men do not take the trouble to find how very suitable are the Psalms, some of them comparatively little known, in connection with really good discourses.

"With every good wish, believe me, my dear sir, yours sincerely, A. T. Niven."

"Rev. Dr. Petticrew, Londonderry."

The Chairman, before bringing the meeting to a close, made the following remarks:—There is one element in the Psalms which I think is sometimes overlooked. You are all aware

that in our time people are very anxious for an ethical gospel. I am utterly puzzled to know why some men, who are so eager for an ethical gospel, are so slow to use the Psalms. For if you look at the Psalms, and if you compare them with any hymns ever written, ethics are strong in the Psalms, but they are amazingly weak in the hymns. Take the 15th Psalm, and ask any man who wants to preach ethics to try to preach up to that standard, aye, and to try to get men to live up to that standard. The man "who changeth not though to his heart he swear." I should like very much if there was anything like an approximate approach to that standard on the part of those men who are so strong on ethical teaching.

It is a good thing to try and find our way in the by-paths of the Psalms. We are too apt to revel in the Psalms that are most familiar. Psalms that are not so familiar contain amazing revelations in Christian experience and Christian ethics; and the proof that the Psalms were designed for the Church in all ages is the fact that the spiritual experience and the ethics of the Psalms are adaptable to men in all ages and under all circumstances.

PRAISE—Psalm 78, 4-7. BENEDICTION.

WEDNESDAY, 6th AUGUST.

EVENING MEETING, from 7-30 to 10 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN :—

REV. T. E. MOFFAT, Paterson, New Jersey, U.S.A.

PRAISE—Psalm 119, 1-8.

Rev. James Wilson, M.A., Belfast, Ireland, led in prayer.

Chairman's Address :—

I cannot do better, as Chairman of this meeting, than to just give you two impressions that have come into my mind during this Conference, and one of my personal experiences some two years ago, that I think may be helpful to you as Psalm-singers, and as those who are contending for the purity of worship unto Almighty God. Someone in the meeting last night and someone to-day gave me the impression that we Psalm-singers were perhaps to be pitied because we are in the minority. And so I have thought it might be well to tell you a little story that I heard told by a celebrated lecturer in the United States of America about five or six years ago. He said that on one occasion he was discussing a political question with a friend. With a great deal of fervour and feeling his friend said, expecting this argument would finish the contention, "We must always go with the majority." And he said in answer, "I do not agree with that." "Yes," he replied, "it is always safer, always better, to go with the majority." "Well," he said, "that may be true according to your understanding and your experience, but there was at least one time in history when it was not very safe to be with the majority." And the man said, "When was that?" And he said, "When Noah and his family went into the ark." And

so it may not always be safe for us to be with the majority. It may be safer to abide with the minority.

The second impression that I received was from a few sentences in the paper of Dr. Petticrew to-day. He said that a brother clergyman visited the United States and Canada some years ago, spent thirteen Sabbaths over the water, attended (as every good Presbyterian does) the services of the sanctuary twice a day, and in all these twenty-six experiences never heard a Psalm sung in the sanctuary in the worship of God. It came into my mind immediately that on one occasion a missionary and an officer of the British Army were having a talk regarding the conditions of India, and the officer said "I was in India five years, I went there hunting tigers, and I never in all that time saw a missionary." And the missionary said, "I was in India ten years, doing missionary work, and in all that time I never saw a tiger." Friends, we just get exactly what we look for, and I claim that if this man went to the United States and Canada looking for Psalm-singers he would have found them inside thirteen Sabbaths.* I assume that he landed at the Port of New York; and he had an opportunity in six churches, without going outside the City, to sing the Psalms of David, and, may I add, better than you sing them in Belfast.

The third point is a personal experience of my own. A good Baptist preacher came into my study one day about two years ago to talk over matters in which we were both interested, and in the course of conversation there came up something regarding the worship of God and our using the Psalms of David, and he said to me, "I never could understand the position of the Psalm-singers why they should refuse to sing hymns; I am sure there is many a good hymn.

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* Mr. Moffat, in this second impression of his, slightly misapprehended Dr. Petticrew's statement, and so slightly misrepresented it. Dr. Petticrew did not say that Psalm-singing could not be found in the United States of America or Canada, but that in point of fact a minister going, say, at random into Presbyterian Churches in America, had not heard a Psalm sung in the course of twenty-six services. He was *simply stating a fact.* Mr. Moffat is aware that there are thousands of such churches in which Psalms are not sung; and this was the point which Dr. Petticrew wished to emphasize, that departure from the exclusive use of the Psalms leads in due time to the entire exclusion of the Psalms. His statement was, of course, made in full knowledge of the gratifying fact that the United Presbyterian Church, to which Mr. Moffat belongs, is a Psalm-singing denomination, and that there are also other denominations which occupy the same Scriptural ground on this point.—SECRETARIES.

I am sure," he said, "we are all the better for singing hymns." And then he proceeded to tell me just what he thought of the hymn-singer in preference to the Psalm-singer. It is always well to listen to a man and to what he has to say; and when he had finished, I proceeded to give him the position of the Psalm-singer in regard to the worship of God, and I will never forget, friends, the expression of his face as he said these words, "What a tremendously exalted idea you have of the worship and the praise of God!" And, my friends, that is just exactly the position of the Psalm-singers—not what will please man, but what will please Almighty God.

THE SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLE REGULATIVE OF THE WORSHIP OF GOD, AND THE EVIL EFFECTS OF DEPARTURE FROM IT, ESPECIALLY IN CONNECTION WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF UNINSPIRED MATERIAL OF PRAISE IN THE PSALMODY OF THE CHURCH.

By REV. PROFESSOR PETTICREW, M.A., D.D., D.Lit.,
Londonderry, Ireland.

At the time of the Reformation, when the numerous corruptions of worship introduced by the Church of Rome had to be dealt with, the principle regulative of Divine worship which was adopted by the Lutheran and Anglican sections of the Reformers, and which is embodied in the 20th Article of the Church of England, was, that "The Church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies; .. . . and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything contrary to God's Word written." This implies that it is lawful for the Church to ordain whatever is not "*contrary*" to the written Word; and that was practically interpreted as meaning that the Church may introduce in worship whatever God has not expressly forbidden in His Word. The view has been condensed into the Latin formula, "*Quod Scriptura non vetat, permittit*"—"What Scripture does not forbid, it permits."

It will be seen that this principle does not present any effectual barrier against Ritualistic or Romish corruptions of worship. On the contrary, it opens the door for innumerable practices for which no positive Divine authority from

Scripture can be pleaded, such, for example, as signing with the sign of the cross in baptism, kneeling at the communion, bowing to the East, the wearing of symbolical vestments, the lighting of wax candles in churches in the daytime, the ceremonial use of incense, holy water, the mixed chalice, the elevation of the host, &c., &c., for *none* of these things is *expressly forbidden* in Scripture.

Not a few Presbyterians, from whom better things might be expected, are so imperfectly acquainted with this whole subject as to speak and act as if that were the principle of their own Church. But this is far from being the case. The principle regulating the worship of God as set forth in the subordinate Standards of the Presbyterian Church, and as held by all sound Presbyterians, is of a much more stringent character. It is, that for all the constituents of every ordinance of worship we require the *positive authority* of *Divine appointment* or *prescription*, either in the form of direct command, "good and necessary consequence," or approved example—such example as that of Christ or His Apostles; and that we are not at liberty to introduce anything else in connection with the worship of God except what comes legitimately under the heading of mere "decency and order." And when the framers of the Standards acknowledged, as they did in the first chapter of the Confession of Faith, "that there are some *circumstances* concerning the worship of God and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed," they showed by the very language used that these "circumstances" were only such mere minor details as were necessary to the carrying out of Divinely *commanded duties*. The "circumstances" were not *in* the worship of God, or any *part* of the worship, but only "circumstances *concerning*" the worship or relating to it; and they were only such "circumstances" as are "*common* to human actions and societies," as the fixing of the *time* when public worship should begin, the *place* of meeting—whether a church, a private house, a barn, the seashore, or the mountain side—*how long* the meeting should last, who should take part in it, &c.; and even these mere "circumstances" or minor details necessary for the carrying out of the commanded duties, which might be regulated "by the light of nature and Christian prudence," were to be "ordered . . . according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed."

The principle requiring *positive Divine appointment* for the various parts of worship is thus laid down in the 21st chapter

of the Confession of Faith, section 1 :—" The acceptable way of worshipping the true God is *instituted by Himself*, and so *limited by His own revealed will*, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way *not prescribed* in the Holy Scripture." That is to say, there is no acceptable way of worshipping God except that which He has Himself appointed ; and, instead of men being left free to mould the worship in accordance with human taste and the fashion of the time, the way of approach to God is so limited by His own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or in any way or mode except that which He Himself has expressly prescribed or appointed in His Word.

Then in the 20th chapter of the Confession, which treats of " Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience," we have the following noble declaration on the subject :—" God *alone* is *Lord* of the conscience, and hath left it *free* from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything *contrary* to His Word." The principle regulative of worship, as set forth in the 20th Article of the Church of England, goes that length. It does not allow the Church " to ordain anything *contrary* to God's Word," that is, anything expressly forbidden by God's Word. But it stops short at that point. Our Confession, however, does not stop there. It takes another step, and a most important one. The full statement of the Confession is : " God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to His Word, OR BESIDE IT, in matters of faith or worship." These three little words, " *or beside it*," which so clearly differentiate the position taken up by the Presbyterian Church from the position taken up by the Church of England in the 20th Article are words of immense significance in this connection. They absolutely shut out all human additions to the Divine appointments in matters of worship as well as in matters of faith, no matter under what plausible pretext they may be introduced ; and they thus make a clean sweep of every Ritualistic and Romish practice. But they do more than that. They shut out every human addition to the Divine appointments for worship, whether distinctively Ritualistic or not ; and, among others, they shut out, we believe, the introduction of a book of uninspired hymns into the Divinely-appointed Ordinance of Praise ; for the introduction of such a book, whether as a supplement to, or a substitute for, the inspired Psalter, is unquestionably " *beside* " the Word of God in the matter of worship : it is a human addition to it. Unlike the " singing of

Psalms with grace in the heart," it is not one of the parts of worship which God has instituted; it has no Divine prescription or appointment for use in the Ordinance of Praise; and though, like innumerable other unauthorized things, it may not be *expressly* forbidden, it is *implicitly* forbidden by the very fact that it has *not* been *appointed*. "The silence of Scripture," as has been well said, "is as real a prohibition as a positive injunction to abstain. Where God has not commanded, the Church has no jurisdiction." "*Quod Scriptura non jubet, vetat*"—"What Scripture does not prescribe, it forbids." The Second Commandment, according to the Larger Catechism, answer 109, forbids "all devising, counselling, commanding, using, and anywise approving, *any* religious worship *not instituted by God Himself*." And in the Shorter Catechism, in answer to Question 51, it is said, "The Second Commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images, or *any* other way *not appointed* in His Word."

The views thus set forth in our subordinate Standards are strictly in accordance with the teaching of the Calvinistic section of the Reformers on the subject.

Knox, in his "Refutation of the Mass," declares the true principle of worship to be, "What has the Lord *required*, not what has He not forbidden?" "This principle," he says, "purified the Church of human inventions and Popish corruptions." And, again he says, "All worshipping, honouring, or other service invented by the brain of man in the religion of God, *without His own express commandment, is idolatry*"

Calvin says, "The rule which distinguishes between pure and vitiated worship is of universal application, in order that we may not adopt any device which seems fit to ourselves, but *look to the injunctions of Him Who alone is entitled to prescribe*. . . . Such is our folly, that when we are left at liberty, all we are able to do is to go astray. And when once we have turned aside from the right path, there is no end to our wanderings, until we get buried under a multitude of superstitions." He adds, "I know how difficult it is to persuade the world that *God disapproves* of *all modes* of worship ***not expressly sanctioned*** by His Word."

Calderwood says, "To the ceremonial law of the Jews it was not lawful for men to add anything or to take away anything from it. 'What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it' (Deut. 12, 32). The prophet there speaks concerning the worship of God. Not less perfect is the law of ordinances under the New Covenant than it was under the Old Covenant. Therefore we must neither add to it, nor take from it." Again he says, "We must avoid not only Jewish sacred rites and

such as bear a likeness to these, but we must also take care that we do not introduce any others than those which the Lord has prescribed for us in the New Testament."

This principle, then, requiring positive Divine authority for all the constituents of worship, was thus laid down and acted on by Calvin and Knox and all the more thorough Reformers. "It was adopted and acted upon by the English Puritans and the Scottish Presbyterians; and," as Principal Cunningham says, "it is the only true and safe principle applicable to this matter. . . . The practical effect of it, if it were fully carried out, would just be to leave the Church in the condition in which it was left by the Apostles, in so far as we have any means of information." These Reforming fathers saw clearly that on no other principle could the Church be reformed; and the Churches that did not adopt and act upon this principle are not yet thoroughly reformed.

Row, when giving an account of the labours of Knox and the others associated with him in the reorganising of the Church at the time of the Reformation, says, "They took not their example from any Kirk in the world—no, not from Geneva—but, laying God's Word before them, they made reformation according thereto." It was largely through the faithful application of this great principle that so complete a reformation was effected in the Calvinistic Churches, and it was the happy results flowing from such application of it in the Church of Scotland that led Knox gratefully to exclaim: "All praise to God alone! We have nothing within our churches that ever flowed from the Man of Sin. Our first petition was that the reverent face of the primitive and Apostolic Church should be again presented to the eyes and knowledge of men; and in that point we say that God has strengthened us till the work was finished, as the world may see."

But it will naturally be asked, Were the Reformers, the Puritan divines, and the other eminent theologians who held the same view, justified in the belief that the principle requiring Divine appointment for all the parts of worship, which was found so useful in reforming the Church, was the principle regulative of Divine worship that is taught in the Word of God? We believe they were; and we readily acquiesce in the appeal "to the law and to the testimony." "What saith the Scripture?" is the all-important question with Presbyterians. Principal Cunningham, who had given much consideration to the whole subject, thus states his view as to the nature of the evidence by which the Scripturality of the principle can be established. He says, "The truth of this principle, as a general rule for the guidance of the Church, is

plainly enough involved in what Scripture teaches concerning its own sufficiency and perfection as a rule of faith and practice, concerning God's exclusive right to determine in what way He ought to be worshipped, concerning Christ's exclusive right to settle the constitution, laws, and arrangements of His kingdom, concerning the unlawfulness of will-worship, and concerning the utter unfitness of men for the function which they have so often and so boldly usurped in this matter."

Time does not permit us to go into any detailed examination of the Scriptural evidence for this principle. We can only in the briefest manner indicate some of the directions in which the evidence in favour of it is to be found. We have, as we shall see, positive statements of Scripture, both in the Old Testament and the New, going to establish it, as well as illustrative instances or applications of the principle, showing the necessity of rigidly adhering to it, and how God punished men for departures from it.

When Moses was about to make the Tabernacle by Divine direction, God said to him, "See that thou make all things according to the pattern that was shewed thee in the mount." And the general principle given for his guidance in all things relating to the worship of God was this: "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt *not add* thereto, nor diminish from it." There was to be no deviation whatever from the forms prescribed, either in the way of addition or diminution; and, again and again, we read of everything being done "*as* the Lord *commanded* Moses."

When Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, offered fire before the Lord which He did not command them to use, a signal judgment, as a mark of the Lord's displeasure, followed: "There went out fire from before the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord" (Lev. 10, 1 and 2). This was not because they had done a thing that was expressly forbidden, for what they did had not been expressly forbidden; but their error lay in not strictly keeping to what the Lord had commanded, and in doing in connection with His worship what the Lord had not commanded.

Uzzah, with good intent, but without Divine authority for doing so, put forth his hand to steady the ark of God, the carrying of which, by God's appointment, belonged to the Levites alone; and God smote Uzzah "for his error; and there he died by the ark of God" (2 Sam. 6, 6 and 7).

Saul, in the prolonged absence of Samuel, took upon himself, without Divine authority, to offer the burnt offering; and the sentence immediately went forth against him that his

kingdom should not continue because he had not kept the commandment of the Lord which He had commanded him. For doing in connection with the worship of God what the Lord had not authorized him to do, the crown fell from his brow, and he lost the kingdom for his house as well as for himself (1 Sam. 8, 11-14).

King Uzziah presumed to go into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense—a function which, by Divine appointment, belonged to the priests, the sons of Aaron—and immediate punishment followed. The leprosy rose up in his forehead, and he hasted to go out of the temple, because the Lord had smitten him; and he was a leper unto the day of his death, dwelling in a several house, and cut off from the house of the Lord (2 Chron. 26, 16-21).

Passing by other cases to which reference might be made, and coming to the New Dispensation, we find that Christ, as the Head of ordinances, appoints all the parts of New Testament worship; and when men appoint observances of their own without any commandment from Him, He pronounces their worship "vain" worship, without any validity—"In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men"—and He condemns them for laying aside the commandment of God, that they may keep their own tradition (Mark 7, 7-9). Laying aside the commandment of God, that they may keep their own tradition! Is there not a close likeness between this action, thus condemned by Christ, and the action of those in modern times who lay aside the Divine Ordinance of the singing of Psalms that they may keep their own man-appointed ordinance of the singing of uninspired hymns in the place of the Psalms?

In the great commission given by the Saviour just before His ascension to glory, He lays upon the Church the obligation to make disciples of all nations, and to teach them to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them (Matt. 28, 18-20). This commission, as well as the Second Commandment, requires, among other things, "the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in His Word." The worship and ordinances are to be kept "pure and entire"—"pure," that is without any human admixture or addition; and "entire," that is without any diminution, or omission of anything that has been Divinely appointed. There is to be no addition to, and no diminution from, or omission of, anything that Christ has commanded. And, let it be observed, His words are: "All things whatsoever I have *commanded* you", not "all things whatsoever I have *not forbidden*", but "all things whatsoever I have *commanded*". "Ye are My friends", says He,

"if ye do whatsoever I *command* you" (John 15, 14). "My sheep hear"—that is, obey—"My voice" (John 10, 27). What Christ has "commanded" is to be our guiding principle; and it is well for us that we have such a chart to steer by in this matter, seeing that, as Calvin observes, "when we are left at liberty, all we are able to do is to go astray."

When the Apostles, under the unerring guidance of the Holy Spirit, were establishing and extending the Church, they adhered strictly to what the Saviour had "commanded", and *we* are directed to be imitators *(mimetai)* of the Apostles, even as they also were of Christ; and we find Paul specially commending those to whom he wrote for keeping the ordinances as he delivered them to them (1 Cor. 11, 1 and 2). "Every view suggested by Scripture of Christianity and the Church", says Cunningham, "indicates that Christ intended His Church to remain permanently in the condition of simplicity, as to outward arrangements, in which His Apostles were guided to leave it. And never, certainly, has there been a case in which it has been more fully established by experience that the foolishness of God, as the Apostle says, is wiser than men—that what seems to many men very plausible and very wise is utter folly, and tends to frustrate the very objects which it was designed to serve. Of the innumerable inventions of men introduced into the government and worship of the Church, without any warrant from Scripture, but professedly as being indicated by the wisdom of experience, or by the Christian consciousness of a particular age or country, as fitted to promote the great ends of the Church, not one can with any plausibility be shown to have had a tendency to contribute, or to have in fact contributed, to the end contemplated; while, taken in the mass—and of course no limitation can be put to them unless the principle we maintain be adopted—they have inflicted fearful injury on the best interests of the Church."

The "evil effects of departure from" this principle, "in connection with the introduction of uninspired material of praise in the Psalmody of the Church," we have not time to enumerate, much less to dwell on. We simply mention the following as specimens:—

1. It does dishonour to the Head of the Church by setting aside one of the ordinances of His worship, the singing of Psalms—the Psalms having been given by God for the express purpose of being *sung* in His praise, not merely *read*.

2. It leads to the depreciation and disparagement of the Psalms in order to bring them down to the level of the uninspired hymns that are put in their place and preferred to them, or even to a lower level.

3. It degrades the doctrine of inspiration, representing

modern hymn-writers as possessing precisely the same inspiration as the authors of the Psalms. In our recent controversy on the subject [*] we were told that "the inspirations of the Spirit of God were not exhausted when the Canon was complete"; and Wesley, and Lyte, and Newman, and Keble and the rest, were represented as having had the help of the Spirit of God in writing their hymns, just as "the sweet Psalmist of Israel" had, in reference to whom we are told by an Apostle, "the Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of David," and who could himself say: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His Word was upon my tongue."

4. It deprives God's people of the inestimable privilege of singing God's own songs in His worship, and thus does a grievous injury to the spiritual life of the people.

5. It in many cases leads to tyranny and the oppression of conscience. It was said by our innovators, when pleading for a hymn-book [*], that there would be no coercion as to its use. But, practically, there is coercion everywhere wherever a minister desires hymns and can carry a majority of his congregation with him—which a minister usually can do. In such cases the cruel alternative left to many of the best of God's people is to be driven out, or to remain and submit in violation of their conscientious convictions. The Saviour forbids, under the most solemn sanctions, the putting of a stumbling-block in the way of even *one* of those who believe in Him. But, in the interests of this innovation, a large number of the members of a Church are often deprived of the right to worship God according to conscience in the congregation with which they have been connected all their lives, and in which their forefathers may have worshipped for many generations.

* In the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

ARGUMENTS FOR THE USE OF THE PSALMS IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.

By REV. GEORGE LAVERTY, M.A., Tyrone's Ditches, Poyntzpass, Ireland.

I. We are commanded to sing Psalms, or, to sing praises, which means the same thing. 2 Chron. 29, 30, "Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites

to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness." God's praises were sung with the words of inspiration. There is no evidence in the Old or the New Testament of men singing praises to God in words uninspired. Suppose the believer dwells alone, he is not thereby excluded from singing: in such a case a solo is perfectly legitimate. "Is any merry? Let him sing psalms." "I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing." God's praises are to be sung in the family; the morning and evening sacrifices of prayer and praise are to be observed continually. "In dwellings of the righteous is heard the melody of joy and health." "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them." God is to be praised in the social meeting. "In the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee." All who fear God are enjoined to praise Him. "Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him." The injunction to sing God's praise applies to Gospel times; and all who admit the authority of the Bible will acknowledge this. Psalm 95, 2, "Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with Psalms." But someone objects that this Psalm has particular allusion to the Jews, as in it there is reference to the forty years sojourn of Israel in the wilderness; but does not the New Testament appropriately apply this declaration to the Christian Church, whether composed of Jews or Gentiles? Rom. 15, 4, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." The Jews were wiser in relation to the authority of the Divine Word than many professing Christians of modern times; for the Jews received and accepted these Psalms that had special reference to the times of the Gospel, such as Psalm 96, "O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth. . . . Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength." Psalm 100, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands." In fervent piety and prayer they desired that all men would engage in praising God. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" Psalm 117, "O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise Him, all ye people;" and lest there should be any misunderstanding as to the application, the Apostle says, Rom. 15, 11, "Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud Him, all ye people;" and again, "Rejoice ye Gentiles, with His people." It is as clear as the light of day that under the present dispensation of the Covenant of Grace we occupy the same position in reference to the Psalms as the Jews did

under the former economy. Let us beware of departures from the Divine Word. 1 Sam. 15, 22, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

II. The Psalms are in every way suited to the Christian dispensation.

1. They are full of the Gospel of Christ. It has been truly said that they describe the inner life of the Man of sorrows—His sufferings, His aspirations, His glorious triumph. Some assert they cannot see enough of Christ in the Psalms: the fault is their own. The veil is upon their own hearts. Our Redeemer has set His seal of approval upon the Psalms—"All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me."

2. In the Psalms there is an all-sufficient treasury of praise. In the infinite wisdom of God they contain all that is necessary for the glory of God and benefit of our souls. They possess a marvellous variety and beauty. The Bible is God's book, "a lamp let down from heaven's high arch." It is made up of seventy books, of which five are included in the Book of Psalms; and in point of size the Book of Psalms is equal to the average size of five books of the Bible, in other words, the Psalms are equal to the one-fourteenth part of the Bible. God has given us Ten Commandments, and claims one day in seven to be a holy Sabbath to Himself; and He has given us one-fourteenth part of the Bible as a book of praise. How beautiful, lovely, and condescending the order and arrangements of the King of kings—seventy books in a permanent and accessible form, corresponding in number to the seventy elders of Israel, and imperishable amid the conflict of empires and convulsions of time. Successive generations of men are invited to consult them, "Ask thy elders, and they will tell thee." And it would be well if all the elders of the Church, preaching and ruling, would submit to their authority. It would be at once both their safety and honour to yield implicit obedience to Jehovah speaking in His Word.

3. The Psalms supply the Christian with abundant comfort and light and direction under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in all the various aspects of spiritual life. As Dr. Cooke has remarked, "Is any sad—they will teach him to cry from the depths of affliction. Is any persecuted—they will furnish him with petitions for a refuge and deliverance. Is any in want—they will lead him to the Friend of the poor and needy. Is any in sickness—they will lead him in the way to the true Physician. Is any dying and in misery—they will show him the path of life, ending in the fulness of joy at the right hand of the

Eternal. And all this they do, because they are the spiritual revelations of the supplications, strong crying and tears of Jesus in the days of His flesh, and therefore furnish to His disciples the model and material of their prayers of faith."

III. The Psalms should be used exclusively in Christian worship upon the ground of purity—purity of doctrine, worship, discipline, and government. They teach the true doctrines of Divine grace. It is essentially necessary to know the truth. "The truth shall make you free." "Buy the truth, and sell it not." In the Psalms the Divine character is portrayed in infinite perfection all round, because portrayed by God Himself. One attribute is not mutilated and another misrepresented. Mercy and truth meet together, and also mercy and righteousness at the same time. Man could not find out the acceptable way of approaching into the Divine presence: man utterly failed to find the way of truth. "The world by wisdom knew not God." "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." God hath been pleased to give us the revelation of His will through His Son, and it is our duty to receive and accept that revelation in all that it teaches and enjoins. And it is presumption in any man to add to what God has given: it is an assault upon Divine wisdom, implying that God's Word is defective, requiring man's art and ingenuity to perfect and adorn it. Yet the perfection of Scripture is emphatically declared, and the Psalms bear testimony on this point. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." After such a declaration as this, and hundreds of others that might be adduced, why, we ask, will men still persist in making additions to the Psalms of the Bible? It is because they are dissatisfied with the Psalms, which teach the truth and exhibit the light. The doctrines of grace are displeasing to men. They hate the Divine sovereignty and the eternal decrees, asserting these are hard sayings, who can bear them? Then they tone down and soften the light. They cut off the angles of the platform of truth. They introduce an attenuated and weakened theology in harmony with their own conceptions; and with vivid imaginations and gushing vocabularies they throw off stanzas that will take the fancy of those who have never seriously studied the doctrines of God's Word, and make the appeal *ad verecundiam*. It is said

we must keep pace with the times, and go forward in improving upon the Service of Praise. Upon what authority, upon what Scriptural principle are the additions to be made? We are commanded to add to our faith virtue, and to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; but it is no part of man's duty to add to the Word of God or supplement His institutions. The Psalms are the words of Him Who knew the end from the beginning. We knew a minister who was a very strong and able advocate of an inspired Psalmody. He was sometimes misrepresented in his statements. He stated publicly on one occasion that he had been represented as saying, "That the man who would make a hymn and sing it in preference to a Psalm was guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost." He said that he had never uttered anything of the kind, but that if he had, he would not have been very far from the truth. It is good for us to abide by the Word of God. There is no promise of the Spirit to enable us to supplant the Psalms; but there is a promise that the Spirit will enable us to profit by what is already written. "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you." No new revelation, no Psalter additions, are required; only make a right use and application of what has been already given. We abide by the Psalms because they contain the truth, and by the truth God is to be worshipped. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." When singing the Psalms we are singing the truth. When singing hymns of man's invention we are singing what God has neither approved nor required. To the question, "Who hath required this at your hand"? hymn-singers can give no satisfactory answer. We sing the Psalms because in them we are informed as to how we are to frame our lives. They tell us how we are to conduct ourselves at home as well as in the public walks of life, and how we are to act towards our neighbour and help him on in the way to Zion. The Psalms tell us also how we are to glorify God—that God Who will not give His glory to another, neither His praise to graven images. It is man's chief end to glorify God and enjoy Him for ever. How are we to glorify Him, glorify His great and glorious name? He has furnished us with the words in the Songs of Zion. The sweet Psalmist of Israel said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His Word was upon my tongue." With the Spirit of God in our hearts we are

furnished with ample material—material that is genuine, supplied by the Spirit of God—material concerning which there can be no suspicion and no silent debates in our minds as to its orthodoxy. Let us sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also, and make melody with grace in our hearts unto the Lord. We sing the Psalms because they furnish us with true and correct views of Zion's King. By singing the Psalms we perform an act of obedience to Him, and being in the right way we are better prepared to see His beauty and glory, the beauty and glory of our Mediator, Who is the Man of perfect blessedness and the eternal Son, the Anointed of the Father, fairer than all the children of men, the King Whose life is as many generations, whose dominion shall extend from sea to sea, and from the rivers unto the ends of the earth, Whose kingdom hath no end. In the Psalms God the Father is praised as anointing the Redeemer with the oil of gladness above His fellows, making Him higher than the kings of the earth, and placing Him at His own right hand till all His enemies shall be made His footstool; and the Holy Spirit is recognised in His renovating, quickening, and enlightening power.

IV. We advocate the exclusive use of the Psalms in Christian worship upon the grounds of the Church's unity and the communion of saints. How much blood and treasure were expended by the contending armies that fought around Jerusalem in the days of the Crusaders, and how much money has been spent in more recent times in making visits to the promised land! And yet, in singing the Songs of Zion, we enjoy higher and greater privileges than any survey or even possession of the land of exiled Judah could give. In the Psalms we accompany the Church of God in her eventful history, from the days of faithful Abraham and times of Moses. We travel with the Church in the wilderness of Arabia, where the law was given on the summit of Sinai, looking upon the camp, with its pillar of cloud and fire, and beholding the manna from heaven, men eating angels' food, the waters flowing from the flinty rock, and the brazen serpent lifted on the banner-pole of the congregation. We become acquainted with Moses, Aaron, Phinehas, Samuel, and David, and others of whom the world was not worthy, men who jeoparded their lives upon the high places of the field, and who in their mighty conflicts were sustained and comforted by the Songs of Zion. And, above all, in Psalm-singing we have fellowship with Jesus Christ, the great Psalm-singer, "Who, in the days of His flesh, and even upon the cross in the act of dying and finishing our redemption, breathed out the faith and love and sorrows

of His holy soul in the language of the Psalms." The introduction of human hymns into the worship of God breaks up the unity and ennobling fellowship of the Church.

"Our Praise Worship" is a sectarian innovation. The name is unhappy and unscriptural, a vain attempt to perpetuate denominationalism. It indicates a retrogressive movement contrary to the Divine, progressive, and glorious ideal of the Church's purity and unity—one Lord, one faith, one baptism. "Our Praise Worship" is in line with uninspired productions. Jehovah's Praise Worship would logically suggest God-inspired matter in the praise, and also God-given grace in the rendering. "The Church Hymnary," "Our Own Hymn-book," &c., are men's books: the Psalms are God's book. The light of the former is that of the glow-worm: the light of the latter that of the noon-day sun. The former are like Job's deceitful brooks that pass away: the latter like the never-failing, boundless ocean.

We hope the time will soon come when all the debris of human compositions in the worship of Jehovah shall be removed for ever, and Jew and Gentile shall unite in singing the praises of God, taking their songs from the treasury of inspired Psalmody, the Church's heritage for thousands of years, and one of her glorious bonds of fellowship, connecting the wonders of Jehovah's arm in the memorable past with the mighty working of His power in the Church's glorious future.

PRAISE—Psalm 96, 6-9.

OBJECTIONS TO THE USE OF THE PSALMS CONSIDERED.*

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In the time allotted to this paper, I propose to consider three leading objections to the use of the Psalms by the New Testament Church.

I. It is objected, that the Psalms, as belonging to the Jewish Church, are obsolete, antiquated, obscure. Hence they may be, should be, laid aside. The modern hymn-books

* Read by Rev. J. T. Potts, B.A., Rathfriland, Ireland.

are often changed, and a new selection is made. Why may not these old Psalms be set aside? This seems a usual and effective way of disposing of an ancient book of praise.

But this sharp treatment of the Book of Psalms as only a common book, hardly satisfies the objectors themselves, for their arguments might be taken from them, and pressed against the whole of the Old Testament. So reasons are framed for retiring the Book of Psalms:—it is Jewish; it has served its day; its language belongs to an "abrogated ritual".

But it must be admitted that what is Jewish in origin may be permanent in value, as for example the Decalogue, revealed to Moses at Sinai, the abiding law, expounded by our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount, and the rule of life to the believer.

Again, the Psalms may be Jewish in dress, and yet contain truth for the world. They cannot lose their dress, and hence the language of ceremony and symbol. But we have the key to all that might be thought obscure. The Book of Psalms is not obscure, nor are its contents obsolete. We ourselves, in New Testament days, are not freed from the language of figure and symbol, that we may be taught. We see yet in part. We know yet in part. The Psalms are not local and temporary; they are eminently spiritual and universal. They are not low and tribal. There is in them the clearest recognition that God is a spirit, and the God of all the earth. Need I refer to the 139th Psalm in its representation of God as the Searcher of hearts, from Whose presence none can hide? The Psalms deal with the human spirit, the same in its moods and desires in all lands. They have a universal character. All nations are called to praise God. "O praise the Lord, all ye nations"—Psalm 117, 1, quoted in Romans 15, 11.

Rev. William Somerville, Reformed Presbyterian Minister of Cornwallis, Nova Scotia, in his treatise, "The Exclusive Claims of David's Psalms" (St. John, N.B., 1855), gives these points as to the freedom of the Psalms from what is local and temporary: "1. The inefficacy of legal sacrifices is taught in the Psalms." "2. Predictions in the Psalms, and in particular those of which Christ is the subject, which admit of a definite accomplishment before the consummation of all things, are presented in a historical form." "3. In those Psalms, in which Christ Himself is the speaker, it would seem that He uniformly appears before us, in the last act of His life of humiliation and sorrow, just about to give up the ghost; so that He is, as it were, evidently set forth, crucified among us." "4. Those parts of the Mediator's privileges and trials

in which His people have not only a legal interest, but have actual fellowship with Him, are sometimes exhibited as *present* enjoyed or suffered, without respect to their relation to the time of His crucifixion." (Pages 120-132).

The Christian Church is directed to sing the Psalms. We quote the epistle of "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad." The 5th chapter and 13th verse reads: "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms." Paul writes to the Ephesians, 5th chapter, verses 18 and 19: "Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." To the Colossians the same Apostle writes, 3rd chapter and 16th verse: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." It may be pardoned one, in his haste, to claim these commands as a broad warrant to use any matter of praise, whether inspired or not; but one who has studied knows, that while we call the book the Book of Psalms, the Jews call it *Tehillim*, as our word hymns; and that the titles of the pieces vary, and that the Apostle uses three of these titles—*Mizmor*, *Tehilla*, and *Shir*—for the compositions, which he qualifies as "spiritual", inspired.

Beginning, then, with the early Christian Churches, there is a long line of testimony to the Book of Psalms as a present joy and help. Believers in all ages have known the Psalms as not obsolete, but as new songs in their hearts in praise of God.

II. It is objected that the Psalms contain material unfit for the use of the New Testament Church. Dr. Isaac Watts, whose "Imitations of the Psalms" bridged the chasm between an inspired Psalmody and the later hymns for the Presbyterian Churches, in his Preface says, "Some of the Psalms are almost opposite to the spirit of the Gospel." "While we are kindling into divine love, some dreadful curse against men is proposed to our lips—as Psalm 69, 26-28—which is so contrary to the new commandment of loving our enemies." "By the time they (the Psalms) are fitted for Christian Psalmody, the composure can hardly be called inspired or divine." Of course the question occurs, Did Dr. Watts regard them as "inspired or divine" when he took them in hand to shape them for Christian worship?

1. There is a lack of reverence in the charge. The Psalms were given by inspiration of God. In Mark 12, 36, Jesus

quotes the 110th Psalm, saying, "David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." So, in Acts 1, 16, the Apostle Peter thus addresses the company in the upper room: "Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus." He then goes on to quote a passage in the 69th Psalm. Paul also quotes it in Romans 11, 9 and 10. When we compare these New Testament passages with the words of Watts in referring to the Psalms, may we not consider his treatment of the inspired Psalms as one of the influences that have promoted lax views of the Old Testament?

2. The portions of the Psalms deemed most objectionable are remarkable in their setting. For example, what more severe than terms that class men with beasts? The 22nd Psalm, in the 12th, 16th, and 21st verses, reads: "Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round." "For dogs have compassed me." "Save me from the lion's mouth: for Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns." Yet this is peculiarly the Psalm of Jesus on the cross, and begins with His cry to Him Who hid His face from Him: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" What more awful than the words in the 69th Psalm, a Psalm singled out by Watts: "Let their table become a snare before them; and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake." &c. Yet look at the setting. This verse precedes the passage quoted: "They gave Me also gall for My meat; and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink." This verse follows: "For they persecute Him Whom Thou hast smitten." So as to other portions to which objection is made that they are unfit for the Christian's lips. They are given to us as the words of Christ, and the Apostle Peter, in Acts, 1st chapter, refers to the same 69th Psalm, with this preface already quoted: "This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus." See also, as already noted, Romans, 11th chapter. Do not the objectors need to study the Psalms in the school of Christ? We turn to the Book of Revelation, that completes the New Testament Canon, written by John, whom Jesus loved—a disciple filled with His Spirit. This message was for the Church at Thyatira: "These things saith the Son of God, Who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are

like fine brass." Then judgments are denounced on "that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess." Thus ends the effort to disparage a book most frequently quoted in the New Testament. When the Scriptures are searched, as directed by Him of Whom they speak, the Psalms are found in accord with the other books—the books of Moses and the Prophets and the Apostles. Men may not attempt, in a fancied higher spirit, to reject the Word and live above its awful truths, as to the end of the ungodly and the wicked. Let us, rather, reverently use the Word, and humbly learn from Him Who is the Lamb of God, the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

III. It is objected that the Psalms fail to embody the New Testament matter of praise, not expressing New Testament truth, and the experience of the believer. In general, we set over against this objection the words of Patrick Fairbairn, in his "Typology of the Scripture": "The Psalms may well be termed, with Augustine, 'an epitome of the whole Scriptures,' and a summary, not, as Luther said, of the Old Testament merely, but of both Testaments together, in their grand elements of truth and outlines of history." He then quotes Hooker, who asks: "What is there necessary for man to know which the Psalms are not able to teach?" (1852 edition, pages 60-63.)

What do we take to be the elements of New Testament praise? The love of God in the choice of His people, the covenant made with His Son our Saviour, the mission of our Lord, His incarnation, His crucifixion, His exaltation, the gift of the Spirit, the calling of the Gentiles, the coming glory of Christ's Kingdom, along with the experience of the godly, are given in the Psalms as matter for praise. The well-known American treatise, "The True Psalmody," republished in Belfast, 1861, under the heading of Chapter 1st, the Book of Psalms: Complete Manual of Praise, has this outline: "Presents the most comprehensive delineation of the perfections of God, and of the character of His government—In Three Persons—Furnishes a full and accurate exhibition of man's real state and character before God—The Psalms are full of Christ—Contain the richest fund of Christian experience—The most eminent Christians and Christian teachers have ever so testified." Then follow twenty-three pages of development of this outline, in ample proof. All is made clear in the light of the New Testament, since Christ has come. Dr. Henry Cooke, in a Preface to "The True Psalmody," Belfast edition, tells us of his turning back to the Psalms as the sufficient and exclusive manual of praise. He says, "After having at-

tempted to explain the verses referred to in the twenty-fourth Psalm, and when I was in the act of explaining, as best I could, the first Psalm, and while labouring to accommodate the description in the Psalm with the state of all I knew of the attainments of the saints, it occurred to me to say in my heart, Is this the way we decide in botany and mineralogy? And my memory and my conscience answered, No! Then said I, in my heart, there never has been a man answering, in all respects, to these descriptions. It was not Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Paul: but was it not "the man Christ Jesus"? The veil was instantly removed from the Book of Psalms, and I saw therein Christ clearly." He adds, "And truly, I believe, there is one view of Christ (and that not the least important to the tired and troubled believer) that can be discovered only in the Book of Psalms—I mean His inward life. No eye-witness of the outward man, though an inspired evangelist, could penetrate the heart. But the Spirit Who 'searcheth the deep things of God' has, in the Psalms, laid open the inmost thoughts, sorrows, and conflicts of our Lord. The Evangelists faithfully and intelligently depict the sinless Man: the Psalms alone lay open the heart of 'the Man of sorrows.' The most pious productions of uninspired men are a shallow stream; the Psalms an unfathomable and shoreless ocean." Would that others were won back, as Dr. Henry Cooke says he was, to "the exclusive use of inspired Psalmody in public worship"! God did not provide a second Psalter. The claim that the New Testament shows traces of any such is vain. We may refer the advocates of this theory to the note, in "The Life and Epistles of St. Paul," by Conybeare and Howson, on Mr. Humphrey's conjecture that a part of the Apostle's address at Lystra is a poetic quotation. The authors say, "The fact that the passage from *Οὐρανοθεν* to *Καιρους* can be broken up into a system of irregular lines, consisting of dochmiac and choriambic feet, proves nothing: because there is scarcely any passage in Greek prose which might not be rendered into lyrical poetry by a similar method: just as in English, the columns of a newspaper may be read off as hexameters, spondaic or otherwise, quite as good as most of the so-called English hexameters which are published" (Scribner's edition, vol. 1, p. 195: note). No: the one Book of Psalms has been given to the Church of God. Israel used it—a chosen people in a chosen land. They are dispersed; they have stumbled in unbelief. But "the veil shall be taken away," "in the reading of the Old Testament" (2 Cor. 3). All the Israel of God—Jew and Gentile alike—in the use of the Bible Psalter shall praise the Lord their Redeemer, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of His people

Israel. "His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, Who only doth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen" (Psalm 72, 17-19).

THE "IMPRECATORY" PSALMS.

By REV. PROFESSOR DICK, M.A. D.D., Belfast, Ireland.

The Psalms have been received by the Church of God in past generations, without any dissentient voice, as a book of that Holy Scripture, of which Christ declared that it "cannot be broken." As such they were given by the Spirit of God, and as such they were accepted, used, and honoured by the Lord Jesus Christ. Having this Divine origin and Divine sanction they are distinctly the Songs of the Lord, and they have the seal of the Divine authorization for use in the Service of Praise. Moreover, it is because they have this authorization, and *solely* because they have it, that it is lawful and right to use them as songs of praise in the worship of God. If they were not given and appointed by God Himself to be used in singing His praise, it would be presumptuous and audacious to use *even them* in that way. For God from the beginning claimed the right to regulate the approach of sinners to Himself, and to prescribe all the forms and ordinances of His own worship. This unquestionable Divine prerogative, which has been so frequently and so fearfully emphasized and vindicated, is fitted to silence for ever *all objections* to the use of the Psalms. The answer given by the Spirit of God to the man who reasons against the Divine sovereignty—"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"—is equally applicable here. Who art thou that art so ignorant as to reason against the appointment of the all-wise God? Who art thou that art so profane and impious as to object to, and reject, the Praise Book graciously given from Heaven by the Holy One of Israel?

Nearly all objections to the Psalms assume that they are only human songs and that they merely express the various moods of the human spirit; or, if objectors do not quite assume this, they forget, at least, that the Psalms are Divine

songs, and that they express the mind of the unchanging Spirit of God.

In the case of the so-called "imprecatory" Psalms, with which we are at present particularly concerned, we may, indeed, have the admission that they are the Word of God, but along with this admission we have the moral jumble of supposing that what expressed the mind of the Spirit, on the score of human feelings towards enemies, in Old Testament times, does not express the mind of the Spirit now. This is equivalent to believing that God approved of, and that His Spirit supplied the words to express, feelings of personal resentment and vindictiveness against personal enemies, and further, that Psalms so prepared and so used were quite suited to a stern and dark dispensation, but are wholly unsuited to the light and tenderness of the Gospel dispensation. Such a view as this involves grievous misapprehension, firstly, of the Divine character; secondly, of the nature of the Divine law; thirdly, of the meaning of the Psalms in question; and fourthly, of the relation of the Old Testament to the New. God never in any dispensation approved of a spirit of vindictiveness on the part of His worshippers. The Old Testament never sanctions such a spirit. In point of fact, David never manifested such a spirit in his relations with his bitterest enemy, Saul. The so-called "imprecatory" Psalms have nothing to do with such a spirit.

Moreover, the Old Testament is not only or chiefly a revelation of law and justice. Much less is it a revelation of retaliation for personal wrongs. It is a part of God's revelation of abounding grace and mercy and loving-kindness; and even the judicial law with all its sharpness of penal enactment was given by the loving Saviour Himself on Mount Sinai. In the Sermon on the Mount, which is sometimes contrasted with Old Testament teaching, to the disparagement of the latter, Christ does not condemn Old Testament teaching. He condemns perversions and misinterpretations of it. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"—a part of the Old Testament judicial law—represents a wholesome principle for the administration of justice between man and man, to the effect that the penalty must be according to the offence—a principle which in its extreme application, a life for a life, holds to the present day in cases of murder in most civilized lands. Christ did not abrogate that law: He condemns vindictive interpretation of it. That He was not abrogating the law or condemning it, is manifest, because His reference to it is introduced in the same terms as those which He applied to traditional expressions of feeling regarding neighbour and enemy—"Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt

love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy." Now this was no part of the Divine law: it was the expression of ignorance of the Divine law, and in the case of the "enemy," the expression of the feeling of the deceitful and wicked heart, in direct opposition to the Divine law, which is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." So that when Christ condemns the perverse maxim, He is but re-affirming the law which He gave to Moses. Christ's injunction, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," is not a new law setting aside an old and harsh law. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you," is not a new law, though the terms of its enunciation are new. It is but the Divine interpretation and application of Sinai's immutable and perfect law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

It is fair and reasonable to assume that David knew much about the breadth and spirituality of the Divine law. As a man after God's own heart he was Divinely enlightened and led. As the sweet Psalmist of Israel he was inspired by the Holy Spirit, Who spake by him and Whose Word was upon his tongue. It is manifest that David lived in close fellowship with God from his youth up, and that it was because of the beauty and saintliness of his character as a creation of Divine grace that he was chosen to supersede Saul. It is equally manifest that when he was employed to indite Psalms for the use of the Church of God then and since, his mind and spirit, in so far as we can think of his mind and spirit in the circumstances, were at their best, and were then free in the highest degree from unworthy thoughts and feelings. Add to this that he spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost; and the irresistible conclusion to the reverent mind is, that the Psalms which he penned cannot possibly be the expression of personal malice or vindictiveness against enemies. On the contrary, they must be held to be worthy of the Holy Spirit of God. It will be observed that it is here assumed that David was the human penman of the Psalms which in their titles are attributed to him, and also that the Psalms are the very Word of God. We make both these assumptions in opposition to the groundless guess-work and hypotheses of the "Higher" Criticism, which are at once very arrogant and very irrational. This, however, forms the subject of another paper for this Conference. We simply note the fact now to show that we do not lay much stress upon the wisdom or upon the reasoning of the "Higher" Criticism, and to show also that the advocates of the use of uninspired hymns often take practically the same ground as the "Higher" Critics, without knowing it. They speak of the

Psalms as the expression of what David and other men thought and felt. And they ask, as though the shallow questions were themselves conclusive, How could David indite songs for the Church now? How could he praise God for a Saviour come? Why should we now be confined to his point of view? Such objectors forget that the Psalms express the thoughts and mind of the Eternal Spirit; and that having such authorship they were not only fitted for the use of the Church of old, but, as the only songs Divinely given, anticipate, and were intended to anticipate, all the claims of the Divine honour, the developments of the Divine purpose of grace, and the necessities of the Church to the end of the world.

Bearing this in mind, let us think of David's spirit as he sits down to pen the 59th, 69th, and 109th Psalms, all which are attributed to him, and which are three of the most decidedly "imprecatory" Psalms in the entire collection. Does he sit down deliberately with hatred and malice in his heart to pen the bitterest curses he can think of against his personal enemies? And does the Spirit of God supply the thoughts and words wherein these curses are put on record? And is the result, a Psalm or Psalms, to find a place in the heart of the most precious book of Holy Scripture? It is utterly inconceivable that David cherished any such spirit. And it would be equally inconceivable that, if this had been his spirit, God would have given these Psalms a place in the inspired collection without expressing in some emphatic way the Divine disapprobation of the spirit and manner and matter of them. These Psalms are in the Book of Psalms by the inspiration, direction, and providence of the most Holy One, with no hint or suggestion that there is anything wrong in their spirit and language; and, therefore, we are bound to conclude, even if there were nothing in their contents to guide us to a clear understanding of their meaning and application, that they are at all events above all criticism as the Word of the Lord.

From this point of view we can easily see that the attitude of the bold objector to the "imprecatory" Psalms is simply irreverent and profane. He is setting himself against the Divine Author of the Psalms. The irreverence and profanity may be shown under a sentimental pretence of concern for the spirit of the Christian religion, but this does not palliate the offence. It rather aggravates it. It is bad for an open infidel to flout the Psalms. It is worse for a professing Christian to do it, as Dr. Isaac Watts has done, in saying that Psalms 69 and 109 "are so full of cursings that they hardly become the tongue of a follower of the blessed Jesus." Many a professing Christian since Watts's day has endorsed that fearfully

profane and marvellously ignorant objection of his—and that under the pretence of special enlightenment and specially cultured devotional feeling. It had surely been wiser and better for such objectors to have strenuously resisted the temptation to this criminal arrogance. And as they manifestly did not understand the Psalms, it would surely have been dutiful and becoming for them to have bowed their heads in humble recognition of the Divine sovereignty. What we cannot understand in God's revelation must at least be received in that self-repressing spirit which asks, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" In such a case He says, "Be still, and know that I am God." This, then, is our first line of argument—THE PSALMS IN QUESTION ARE GOD'S OWN WORD, INDITED BY HIS HOLY SPIRIT, AND CONTAIN NO SENTIMENTS THAT ARE INCONSISTENT WITH HIS HOLY CHARACTER.

While this consideration, however, is fitted to prevent or to silence all insolent objections, the serious mind naturally desires to have something more than this, if more be possible. These Psalms have often perplexed God's children, no doubt mainly because too much stress has been laid on the human instrumentality employed in the writing of them. It is difficult to read any expression of thought or feeling in the Scriptures without thinking of the human writers. This difficulty is perhaps increased by the pulpit habit of speaking of the Psalmist's experience, or of the prophet's experience, or of the apostle's experience. What we often thus represent as the writer's experience may not be the writer's experience at all. The Psalms which express the most perfect delight in God's law and in God's fellowship may be the expression, rather, of the perfect life of the Second Man, Who is the Lord from heaven, than the expression of the actual attainments of David, for instance, or of any other mere man, although, of course, the holy soul of David aspired to such heights of obedience and communion. It is certain that, in the 22nd Psalm, David is not giving his own experience when he says, "They pierced my hands and my feet . . . they part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." If the reverent mind feels constrained to regard Jesus Christ as the speaker here, and to conclude that David searched "what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in" him "did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ," as in this Psalm, is it not warrantable to conclude that the Psalmist, or prophet, did not always realize himself the full meaning or force of his own words? To give undue prominence to the personality or experience of the human penman tends proportionately to obscure the thought and

purpose of the Divine Author. We are nearest to the solution, if there be any solution for us in our present state, of the difficult or mysterious things of Scripture when we bear well in mind that these things are not human conceptions or experiences, but belong to the depths of "the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." The difficulties, as has been said, are in the Bible itself, and, besides, they are not peculiar to the Book of Psalms.

In attempting to solve these difficulties, commentators, otherwise reverent and sensible, have suggested that much of the stern and vindictive complexion of many of the Psalms may be due to the spirit of the age in which they were composed. This, however, implies that the Psalms are but human compositions, and shows forgetfulness of the Divine Authorship. God is not given to change. Moreover, such a suggestion gives up the adaptation of the Psalms to every age, and virtually treats them as only local and temporary songs which somehow have been preserved and which show how men thought and felt long ago. We may safely affirm, from what we have already seen of the relation of the Old Testament to the New, that NOTHING of the "imprecatory" character of the Psalms is due to the spirit of the age in which they were written, unless, indeed, in so far as the evils against which these "imprecatory" Psalms are directed existed in the age in which the Psalms were written. But these evils have existed to a greater or less extent in every age since.

Another consideration that has afforded relief to minds perplexed about these prayers against enemies is, that in the Hebrew they are not all *prayers*, but are, many of them, *predictions* of Divine judgment against impenitent transgressors. In many instances the verbs that are translated as prayers are not in the Imperative form, but are in what some grammarians call the Imperfect and others the Future. It is, however, but fair to say here that the translators of the Revised Version have adhered substantially to the Imperative form, translating these as prayers, as the translators of the Authorised Version had done. Nevertheless, these variations of form may throw some light on the difficulties for us. We have at one time a prayer for judgment, at another time a denunciation or prediction of impending judgment. It is not with a disposition to gloat over the punishment of fellow-creatures that the child of God speaks of the wrath to come. There may be in this the exhibition of pity and compassion, precisely as there was in the case of Christ Himself when He said, "He that believeth not shall be damned." If the denunciation of fearful wrath may be uttered in mercy, who shall say that the prayer for the outpouring of the vials of wrath—a prayer which may

be regarded as having respect to the claims and honour of God—comes from a merciless or vindictive heart? Christ wept over Jerusalem before He came to destroy it.

Another consideration tending to solve the Christian's difficulties with regard to Psalms of this kind is, that in some instances they may be regarded as expressing *the feelings of others* rather than the feelings of the worshipper. The 137th Psalm may be taken as an example of this. At the close of that Psalm we have the prayer, "Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom"; and then the worshipper, turning to the daughter of Babylon, and foretelling her destruction, says, "Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones." This has been regarded by many as simply an atrociously cruel sentiment. It need not, however, be regarded as more than the prediction, founded upon the general principles of God's retributive providence and upon the express teachings of the Lord by His prophets, that Babylon's day of judgment was coming, and that as Babylon had exulted or had been "happy" in wanton slaughter and cruelty, so in turn her enemies should exult or be "happy" in destroying her. Moreover, it may be profitable to remember, in our meditations on this Psalm, that it is more than the wail of broken-hearted Jewish patriots over the desolation of their land: it is the cry of the spiritual Israel to the Lord of hosts when the enemies of true religion are apparently triumphant and the Church is brought so low that there is little left to cheer but the hope that the Lord will in due time bring His and His people's enemies down even to the dust.

The commentator, Albert Barnes, suggests a number of considerations that might reasonably explain many of the Psalms that are usually called "imprecatory." Firstly, David was a king. Secondly, the punishment of criminals is right. Thirdly, there is an executive. Fourthly, it is lawful for a member of the executive [or, for that matter, for any member of a community] to pray for the detection and punishment of crime. These considerations show that in many instances, at least, there may be easily intelligible grounds for these prayers against transgressors. Those tender-hearted objectors who would shrink with a shudder from singing or praying, "Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered," or "Destroy Thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels," would probably not shrink from praying for the detection and execution of an atrocious murderer, especially if he had murdered some one dear to them. If an invading army were entering our land, the most sentimental among us would hardly hesitate to pray, "Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be."

But there is a far stronger line of argument, so far as the solution of difficulties about these Psalms is concerned, and that is the *obvious relation of some of the very strongest of them to Jesus Christ Himself.* It is made plain in the New Testament that the 69th Psalm and the 109th Psalm refer to the Lord Jesus Christ. A number of quotations are made from the former which show that Christ is the speaker, and that He as the Mediator "Who was made sin" endured the reproaches cast upon God and His kingdom, was eaten up with the zeal of God's house, and was hated without a cause. It appears, then, that the "cursings" which would not "become the lips of a follower of the blessed Jesus" were really pronounced by the lips of the blessed Jesus Himself, were indited by His Spirit, and were by the Spirit put into the lips of His followers. The 109th Psalm is quoted more than once specifically in the New Testament—notably in Acts 1, 16, "This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus." And the Scripture referred to is one of the "imprecations" or "cursings" of the 109th Psalm, "Let his habitation be desolate . . . and his bishoprick let another take." It were utter folly to suppose that David had primarily in view here some of his personal enemies. However much or little he knew of the real application of the words which the Spirit put into his mouth, we may be sure that he acquiesced humbly in the Divine judgments upon all who would basely betray the cause of God and truth. Moreover, it were inexcusable wickedness on our part, and inexcusable ignorance of the meaning and application of this Psalm, for us to take it and apply it to some of our own personal enemies.

These prayers, then, for woes unutterable upon enemies are the prayers of Christ Himself. But the difficulty to many minds about this is that it seems inconsistent with His prayer for enemies, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." There would, indeed, be a great inconsistency if Christ had prayed in the same circumstances and concerning the same persons, "Destroy them," and "Forgive them." That the two prayers fell from His lips, we know; and that they represent two different things which He received a commission from the Father to do, we know. He has power on earth to forgive sins, and He has power on earth to execute judgment upon enemies. In the one we see His Mediatorial work on one side; in the other we see it on another side. It was fitting that when He was executing His great commission to give His life a ransom for sinners He should offer a prayer that would reveal His goodwill toward men, and would prove

incontestably that He was long-suffering, slow to anger, willing to forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin. This, doubtless, and much more that cannot be dwelt on now may be found in the prayer for forgiveness. But there comes a time, and there come circumstances, when His long-suffering has an end, and when those who refuse to kiss the Son must perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little. It is equally fitting, then, that in His Mediatorial character He should pray for their destruction. The Psalms themselves present both sides of His Mediatorial character and work in these respects. "Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will He teach sinners in the way"; "Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest." So in the New Testament, "forgiveness of sins" is to be "preached in His name among all nations"; and, on the other hand, wrath is to come to the uttermost upon those who know not God and obey not the Gospel, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, because of the wrath of the Lamb.

It thus appears that even these "imprecatory" Psalms, so far from belonging peculiarly to a stern and rigorous dispensation long past, have even more interest for, and more direct application to, the New dispensation than the Old. For hostility to God and stubborn rejection of His salvation are more inexcusable now because of the full light of revelation now enjoyed by the Church, and because of the ever accumulating light of history. And precisely because the light is now greater than of old, the spiritually enlightened soul is disposed to think more of the claims of the Lord's most holy name, and to pray to Him that He would even by righteous judgments plead His own cause and vindicate His own name.

More than this, while these Psalms are to be humbly used in the worship of God in every age of the great struggle between good and evil, and to be used for the glory of God as indicating what He will do to His stubborn foes, and how His saints acquiesce in His righteous judgments, even these Psalms will be used most conscientiously and intelligently in ages when the Church attains most nearly to the mind that was in Christ Jesus. In a period of advanced and growing saintliness there will be, of course, growing meekness and patience on the part of Christ's followers toward their personal enemies, but there will be also growing indignation against the inveterate enemies of Christ and of godliness. In such a time the "imprecatory" Psalms will be even more appropriate as expressive of the concern for Christ's honour and the love to His Person and Cause which will constrain the best Christians to hate all who hate Him. The "two-edged

sword" of the 149th Psalm, which is regarded as out of date and shocking by the crude Christianity of this time, belongs really to the time of perfected Christian thought and feeling, in the Great Day of Righteous Judgment. The same Spirit who gave that Psalm to the Church long ago says of the glorious Church of the future, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"

ANSWERS TO THE COMMON ARGUMENTS FOR THE USE OF HYMNS IN DIVINE WORSHIP.

By REV. JAMES WILSON, M.A., Belfast, Ireland.

The subject assigned me is of considerable importance, while the time at my disposal is very limited. I shall, therefore, consult the convenience of all by proceeding at once and directly to consider a few of the arguments advanced in favour of an uninspired and human hymnology in the Service of Praise to God.

I. One argument is, that the young members of our congregations desire hymns, and if we do not yield to this desire, they will attend the services of Churches where hymns are employed. It is scarcely proper to designate this as an argument; however, let us honour it by the application of that term.

I object to it as an argument in favour of human hymns for the following among other reasons:—

1. It implies the inward conviction that the Psalms are the best, and that if it were not for the presence of the young the Psalms would still be employed in the Service of Praise. I do not consider that is a proper attitude to assume: it is decidedly unfair to the Church, to the Psalms, and to the young themselves. If the Psalms are the best, then for the sake of the Church we should adhere to them; if they are the best, then for their own sake we should adhere to them; if they are the best, then for the sake of the young let us by all means adhere to and employ only the best.

Further, if the young have a tendency towards error or evil in any direction, it is evidently the duty of the Church and of her accredited office-bearers to see that such tendency is checked, and that the young are directed in the ways of truth and righteousness. The Church all along her history has

been anxious to safeguard the well-being and welfare of the young, especially in times when there was danger from the influences of error. Admonition has not been withheld, nor has it been in vain.

It is not argument to assert that hymns must be employed, because the young desire them. It is the duty of the Church to edify and lead the young, and not to be led by the young. The young might desire many things that would not be either for their own good or for the glory of God. Are we prepared to introduce these things into the services of Divine worship? Surely no sane person would advocate such mode of procedure.

2. I am anxious to know how this desire of the young for human hymns has been discovered. Have any meetings of the young ever been held with the express purpose of making known their minds on this momentous matter? Have votes been taken at these meetings, and with what result? These, I humbly submit, are pertinent questions; and I think, in fairness to the young, they should be answered.

The young are not all saints; but, at the same time, we do not charge them with being sinners above all other sinners in this respect. I cherish a very affectionate regard for the young. I am convinced they are reasonable, and, in the main, they desire to do what is right. I am anxious to know then, when, where, and how the plebiscite of the young has been taken, and what is the nature of the resolutions or memorials that they have sent to the courts of the Church expressive of their desire for human hymns in the worship of God?

So far as I am aware, no such meetings have been held, and no such resolutions or memorials agreed to. The argument—if we may dignify it as such—is largely imaginary.

3. On behalf of very many of the young, I desire to enter my solemn protest against this misrepresentation of their opinions and convictions. Many of the young are as strongly in favour of the exclusive use of the Psalms as the older members of the Church. This is only to be expected. They have been trained in Christian homes, where Psalms are exclusively employed; they have been blessed with the influence of godly parents; they have attended our Sabbath Schools, where the great principle regulative of acceptable worship has been taught and enforced; they have early committed to memory the great fundamental fact, that we are not to worship God "by images, or any other way not appointed in His Word."

It would be remarkable if the young were to forget these early impressions and pious influences. I am not prepared to admit any such conclusion.

4. Is it true that those who have not employed human

hymns in the worship of God have been deserted or abandoned by the young? I fearlessly affirm it is far from being true. Among the most prosperous and progressive congregations in the land can be reckoned those who confine themselves to the exclusive use of an inspired Psalmody. The young have not deserted these congregations. They have been among the most regular in their attendance upon the means of grace. They have ever been ready to help forward the cause of God; and they have exhibited an attachment to the Songs of Zion that is commendable and praiseworthy.

The argument, as far as the young are concerned, appears to be unsound and inconclusive. It may be argued, and has been argued: Use hymns to get the young into the Church, and teach them better when once their attendance is secured. But if deception be employed to get the young into the Church, other methods equally deceptive must be adopted to retain them. Such procedure cannot be to the praise of the Church, nor for the glory of her King and Head. Shall we do evil that good may come? If we be painstaking in the training of the young, we shall have their sympathy and assistance in their maturer years; if we be faithful to them, they will be faithful to us; if we carefully and prayerfully train up the young in the way they should go, when they are old they will not depart from it.

II. Another argument is often advanced for the use of human hymns in the praise of God—namely, we are permitted to compose our own prayers, and, therefore, we should be permitted to compose our own hymns of praise. This as an argument often passes muster with the thoughtless multitude.

It proceeds on erroneous principles. It takes for granted that because a man can pray, therefore he is a poet; that because he can make a prayer, therefore he can compose a hymn. That all can pray will be readily conceded; that all are poets will not be admitted by anyone. Hence the fallacy is easily detected.

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that all can compose their own songs of praise. Think, then, what would be the the character of our religious assemblies. One might use a short measure hymn, another a common, another a long, another a peculiar, and so on to the end of the list.

I fear there would be little order in our services and little edification in our songs. We might remonstrate with those who would create discord in the Praise Service. Their reply would be brief and effective: We were permitted to offer our own prayers, and we are equally entitled to offer our own hymns. We might further remonstrate and say: You see

you are creating a discord in this solemn and sacred service, and everything should be done in order. They might further reply: We are only taking the liberty you give; we were permitted to offer our own prayers without dissent, and we will continue to use our own hymns, whether they produce concord or discord.

We can easily discern the outcome of this illogical position. That, of course, is not what is meant by the advocates of human hymns. They simply mean that because we are permitted to compose our own prayers we should let others compose hymns for us. It is quite evident, however, that there is no logical connection between the premises and the conclusion. It is the employment of words without meaning. Suppose any of us use the hymns of Watts or Wesley or Cowper, in what sense are they ours? They cannot be ours in any definite sense whatever. They are Watts's or Wesley's or Cowper's: that is all. The argument with which we are dealing has often been met and refuted, and we will only present a few thoughts of a general character in reference to it.

1. It proceeds on the principle that because we know and can express our own wants in prayer, we are equally acquainted with the excellencies and perfections of God Whom we honour in our praise. Prayer is the expression of our desires unto God. We know our need, and we desire blessings to meet them, and, in expressing these desires, we pray. Praise is altogether different. It is a celebrating of the excellencies and perfections of the Supreme Being. None by searching can find out God. None can find out the Almighty unto perfection. We are limited in our conceptions and knowledge of God, and to meet the helpless defect of our being, God has graciously come to our aid in providing us with songs in which to praise Him. The argument for the use of an inspired Psalmody lies at the very foundation of true and acceptable worship. The argument for the use of human hymns proceeds on the principle that because we know ourselves, we are equally acquainted with God; that because man has a subjective knowledge of himself, therefore he has an objective knowledge, equally clear and equally comprehensive, of the Infinite One. It is not difficult to see the absurdity of such a position.

2. Man is a mutable being, ever changing in his feelings and in his fears, in his wants and in his wishes. His prayers must of necessity vary with his subjective requirements, and he could not be profitably confined to any particular form of prayer. On the other hand, God is the same in all ages; with Him is no variableness or shadow of turning. The songs He

has given are always seasonable and always appropriate for expressing the excellencies and prerogatives of the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible. If the Service of Praise be designed to express our own excellencies and perfections, then, I admit, we would be at liberty to compose our own songs; but if God is to be praised, then the matter of our songs remains with Him. We worship the God of glory, not ourselves; and He has supplied us with songs that are acceptable to Himself and for the spiritual welfare of those who employ them. We are compelled by the force of argument, but especially by the teaching of the Word of God, to confine ourselves to the songs that are prescribed for us, and in the use of which we violate no Divine law, we wound no conscience; and we are assured that, in thus honouring God, He will honour us.

3. In our prayers we are not sufficient of ourselves to know and to express what we really require. We know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities. The Spirit of prayer has been graciously promised to teach us what we need and to teach us how to approach God in that solemn and sacred exercise. No such promise has been made in regard to the composing of hymns for our praise. There is nothing remarkable in this; it is only to be expected, for the obvious reason that God has already supplied us with a book of songs by which we are to celebrate His praises. No book of prayers has been provided for us by which to express the necessities of our nature, the heaviness of our hearts, or the sobbings of our souls; but the Spirit of God is promised to teach us to pray and to direct us in prayer.

For these and other reasons we conclude, that the fact that we are permitted to compose our own prayers, enlightened and assisted by the Spirit of God, does not form any reason for composing our own songs of praise to God, even if every individual were gifted with poetic talents—which is not the case.

III. A third argument for the use of hymns in the praise of God is, that other Churches use them, and in order to keep in line with them we should use them also. This is practically the argument that the majority is right and the minority wrong. It is an argument to which, of course, we cannot possibly subscribe. Have we any Divine warrant for acquiescing in such an argument? None whatever. Divine prescription is the rule which regulates our worship. Our Standards assert that "the Word of God" (not the practice of other Churches) "is the only rule to direct us how we are to glorify God." Many other Churches have adopted principles

and practices to which we cannot possibly subscribe. Why ask us to conform to them in this more than in other matters? For example, we cannot adopt the mode of baptism practised by some sections of the Christian Church, while we are, nevertheless, urged to fall into line with them in the matter of praise to God. We cannot subscribe all the doctrines held by some other sections of the Church of God. Why are we asked to agree with them in this respect? The Seven Churches of Asia had each a fault, not all the same, but not one was blameless. If their errors had not been exposed and condemned by the Spirit of God, we might possibly have placed them on the list of virtues. We might have been urged now to fall into line with the Churches of Asia in the very matters in which they now stand condemned. There was no infallible Church even then, and I suppose we will admit that there is no infallible Church even yet.

No Church can be set before us as an infallible guide for us to follow. Since there is no infallible Church, there is no infallible guide for us in any of the Churches, no matter how numerous or how influential may be their membership. Conformity to the law and testimony of God is the rule by which we are to regulate the Service of Praise, as well as the other services of the Church. Joyfully accepting that testimony we set sail; by it we shape our eventful course; and by means of its hallowed light we hope to steer safely and securely among the shoals and quicksands of the world until at last we reach the haven of eternal rest, and join "the general assembly and Church of the firstborn."

PRAISE—Psalm 76, 7-10. BENEDICTION.

THURSDAY, 7th AUGUST.

FORENOON MEETING, from 10 to 1 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN:—

REV. EDWARD M'FADDEN, D.D.,
Hamilton, Ohio, U.S.A.

PRAISE—Psalm 118, 19-26.

Rev. Gawin Douglas, Loughbrickland, Ireland, led in prayer.

Chairman's Address:—

Ladies and Gentlemen—I consider it no small honour to be permitted to preside at a Psalm-singers' Conference in the city of Belfast, Ireland; and I deem it no small privilege to be one of the representatives of the largest exclusively Psalm-singing denomination in the world. We are not met here as apologists, as some of the people of Belfast, by their letters in the papers of the city, seem to think. These midges—or mosquitoes, as we in America would call them—are buzzing about, and trying to make it appear that we are here trying to galvanize the corpse of Psalmody. My dear friends, Psalmody was never more "alive and kicking" than to-day. It is said of George III. that he was on one occasion presented by one of his chaplains with a book he had written, entitled, "Apology for the Church of England." George III., in his abrupt way, replied, "The Church of England needs no apology." And I can say concerning these old Psalms, the Psalms of David need no apology. If there is any apology necessary, it should be by innovators. We are simply carrying on the work which our forefathers gave us to do, and which we expect to continue until the end of time. I say I am glad to represent the largest exclusively Psalm-singing Church in the world. I think

statistics will bear me out that it is not in a spirit of boasting I call your attention to the fact, but simply for the purpose of showing to those in the city of Belfast, and other parts, who have recently departed from the faith on the ground that it is necessary in order to preserve the status of the Church and to increase or hold its membership, that there should be something used beyond the God-given Psalms of the Bible. Our Church, representing over 100,000 members, has not found it necessary to give up the Psalms. In fact, our Church has been increasing rapidly; but I think there is one reason why we have done this, and that is, that we have sung the Psalms into favour. We do not sing them all the time as though we were going to a funeral and expected to end in the cemetery. We sing them as though they were worth singing—and we all sing them—and when we come to sing,

"O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord;
And all that in me is
Be stirred up His holy name
To magnify and bless,"

we do not sing it to a mournful tune, but we sing it to some uplifting tune that seems to go up to God Himself. I have heard it suggested that it is necessary for us to have something that will express our views, and that it is impossible for us to give full expression to our feelings in these Gospel days in anything else than a hymn. I am reminded of the story, that one time a young, raw licentiate entered a Scotch pulpit in one of the smaller places, and before preaching he gave out two Psalms; but at the close of the service, he said, "We will now sing the 16th Paraphrase, as I find no Psalm that will suit the case." There was an old Scotch lady sitting at the back, and she leant forward and asked, "What is it he says?" The licentiate's statement was repeated to her, and her reply was, "I doot he has nae case." I cannot conceive of any experience of the human heart that will not find expression in the Psalms. As to our brethren in the hymn-singing Churches, they know no better than to sing hymns—they were raised that way—and we sometimes are a little hard with them. Now, the ones I find fault with are those who in the Psalm-singing Churches, established with the distinct understanding that the Psalms of David to the exclusion of all uninspired compositions are to be used to the end of time, bring in uninspired compositions. Those are the only ones I find fault with. As for others, let them sing what seemeth good unto themselves; but as for me and my house, we will sing Psalms. I consider the Psalms sufficiently broad, high, and deep to suit all the different shades of experience. As

far back as I can remember, I can remember singing the Psalms. I can go back to the hour when first I was taught by loving mother's lips,

"The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want,"

and I have looked over the lives of men from the first to the close, and I find that the man who can begin by saying in early life, "The Lord is my Shepherd", will be able to close his experience by singing,

"I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

And when sometimes discouraged by reason of omissions and transgressions, I have turned to the 51st Psalm, and have found there words that brought me up to the very Throne of God in heaven. And if I desire to give expression to the cleansing power of Jesus Christ, to the mighty power that transforms and lifts men up from the depths, I can turn to the 40th Psalm, and find the words,

"He took me from a fearful pit,
And from the miry clay,
And on a rock He set my feet,
Establishing my way."

So, beloved, whatever may be our experience there is nothing necessary outside the one hundred and fifty Psalms; and I thank God for them. We, as Psalm-singers, are in the minority, but we are on the right side, and we know that one day victory shall be ours.

DO EPHESIANS 5, 19, AND COLOSSIANS 3, 16, WARRANT THE USE OF UNINSPIRED HYMNS IN THE ORDINANCE OF PRAISE? *

By REV. PROFESSOR JAMES HARPER, D.D., Xenia, Ohio, U.S.A.

Many, indeed most, hymn-singers, if asked by what authority they present in worship songs of mere human composition, would answer that no warrant is needed other than the general

* Read by Rev. A. T. Hemphill, Swanwick, Illinois, U.S.A.

command to praise God in song and the use of songs of orthodox tenor.

Others, however, with a clearer apprehension of the law of worship, when asked by what authority they offer to God in solemn service songs of uninspired origin, point to a few things in the New Testament as affording such sanction, but chiefly to the two texts, Ephesians 5, 19, and Colossians 3, 16, which are now to engage our attention. In our view, on the contrary, the texts specified neither warrant nor favour the use of uninspired hymns in the worship of God, or, indeed, of any but those embodied in the Canonical Psalter.

It may not be needless in these unsettling days to explain briefly what we mean by the phrase, "an inspired hymn." There are those who go so far as to say that a hymn composed by a good man and embodying Scriptural sentiments may be characterized as "inspired". The distinction between "inspiration" and "spiritual illumination" is thus denied or ignored. All genuine disciples of Christ enjoy spiritual illumination, but only a few of them have received the gift of inspiration. By inspiration men may receive truth and be qualified to express it inerrantly; by inspiration truth may be intellectually apprehended and declared. By spiritual illumination the moral beauty and excellence of the truth are perceived and felt. Inspiration moves in the sphere of the intellectual, and does not necessarily imply the regeneration of him thus gifted; spiritual illumination relates to the moral, consists in a sense of the beauty and excellence of spiritual truth, and belongs to all regenerated persons and to none else. The gift of inspiration insures an intellectual perception of truth and ability to convey it correctly. The grace of spiritual illumination affords an *appreciative* sense of truth as far as known; but it is no guarantee that this truth may not be mixed with error, and may not be badly blurred in an attempt to communicate it to others. To be a good man and to be an inspired man are very different conceptions. Moreover, why limit inspiration to the work of hymn-writing? Why not set up a claim of inspiration for sermons and theological treatises? If John Henry Newman was inspired in writing the hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light," why might he not have been inspired in writing Tract Ninety to prove how one might properly assent to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England while in his heart a Romanist?

Coming now to the task more immediately in hand, we submit a series of considerations tending to the conclusion that in Ephesians 5, 19, and Colossians 3, 16, the practice of singing uninspired hymns in the worship of God has no support.

1. In these verses there is no direction given to compose psalms, hymns, or songs wherewith to worship God. The injunction is to employ, not to prepare, the compositions specified. It is significant that nowhere in Scripture are we told to prepare a hymn for the worship of God. To pray according to our ability and in reliance on the Spirit as our Helper, we are urged and commanded; but never to make a hymn for use in the solemn worship of God. When solicited by His disciples to teach them to pray, our Lord complied; but He never gave them a model hymn, as He did a model prayer, nor was He ever asked so to do. We thus learn incidentally that prayer and praise, however close their affinity, are distinct exercises.

2. It is altogether unlikely that the Ephesian and Colossian converts, most of them but a short time before brought out of heathenism, were possessed of a body of songs of their own composition designed for use in worship.

3. The Apostles to whom, under the Head of the Church, it was allotted to settle authoritatively its form, order, discipline, and worship in its New Testament stage, did not provide a single song for use in worship, while they inculcated the duty of singing the praises of God. Do not these facts indicate that they counted the Psalter an adequate praise-book for the New Testament Church, as it had been for the Old?

4. Directed to praise God in song, yet unprovided with hymns either of their own or of Apostolic composition, the converts of Ephesus and Colosse would most naturally turn to the Book of Psalms, a collection of devotional odes given by God for the special purpose of praise, and for centuries used as its hymn-book by the Jewish Church, a collection, moreover, bearing many indications that it was meant for permanent and world-wide use.

5. The terms used by the Apostle would be sufficient, if anything were needed, to convince those people that the inspired Psalter was meant to be to them, as it had so long been to the Jews, the manual of praise.

Greek was the mother tongue of the people primarily addressed in these two Epistles. The Greek translation of the Old Testament, commonly called the "Septuagint" version, was the chief, if not the only, part which they possessed of that "word of Christ", the rich indwelling of which in them Paul urges. If they examined the Psalter in that version, they would find the very words "psalm", "hymn", and "song" employed as sub-titles of the different poems collectively called "The Book of Psalms". As to the reference of the word "psalms" there can be no reasonable doubt. It may apply in a general way to the entire compilation as "The

Book of Psalms", while in a special sense it may mean some only of the poems embraced in that collection. The objection of Archbishop Trench that, had the Book of Psalms been meant, the article in Greek would have been prefixed, may be met in two ways—either by saying that in Greek the article is often omitted before a word denoting a *well-known* object; or by maintaining that the Apostle refers to those odes in the sacred collection which are distinctively and explicitly designated "psalms" in the Greek translation of the Psalter. The latter method of dealing with the objection in view seems preferable.

That the word "hymns" is applicable to the Psalms at large, although, perhaps, to some of them more particularly, the Ephesian and Colossian converts could easily discover by consulting their Greek translation of the Psalter. For instance, in Psalm 72, 20, where, in our English translation, we read, "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended," the Greek translation is to this effect—"The *hymns* of David, the son of Jesse, are ended."

Again, in Psalm 100, 4, where, in English, we read, "into His courts with praises," the Greek translation is equivalent to "into his courts with *hymns*".

Moreover, many of the psalms bear the title of "songs", as those primarily addressed by Paul could easily see in the inscriptions of Psalms 18, 45, 46, 120-134, inclusive. Whether these inscriptions be regarded as a part of the inspired text or not, they certainly existed in the Septuagint translation.

Corroboration of the views now expressed may be easily found. For instance, Josephus, a contemporary of Paul, writing in his "Antiquities of the Jews" (Book VII., chapter 12, section 3) about King David, says—"David composed odes (or songs) and hymns to God . . . . and taught the Levites to sing hymns to God, both on that called the Sabbath day, and on the other festivals." The reference here is unquestionably to psalms composed by David, and to these Josephus applies the very words (odes, or songs, and hymns) which some now deem inapplicable to them. It is observable that Josephus does not use the word "psalms" in describing David's literary labours. This is due, probably, to the fact that, in the earlier and strictly classical Greek, the word *Psalmos* denoted rather the music than the words of a song. But it was of the words that Josephus was treating. Elsewhere and in different instances this Jewish historian alludes to the Psalms under the title of "hymns". (See Antiquities, Book XI., chapter 3, section 8; Book XI., chapter 4, section 2; Book XX., chapter 9, section 6; Contra Apion, Book I., section 8.)

Some confirmation of our view of the verses under notice may be derived from the writings of Christian antiquity. Thus Augustine, in his "Retractations" (Book II., chapter 11), speaks of hymns "chosen out of the Book of Psalms".

Repeatedly, in "The Apostolical Constitutions", the Psalms are styled "the hymns of David", or simply "hymns".

In his work entitled "Paidagogos", written early in the third century (Book III., chapter 4), Clement of Alexandria, commenting on Colossians 3, 16, uses this language, "ᾠδὴν πνευματικὴν ὁ Ἀπόστολος εἴρηκε τὸν ψαλμόν," that is, "The Apostle has called the Psalm a spiritual song."

Commenting on Ephesians 5, 19, Jerome, one of the most learned of the Fathers, makes this remark: "The difference between psalms and hymns and spiritual songs is best seen in the Book of Psalms."

Furthermore, the close connection hinted in Colossians 3, 16, between the rich indwelling of "the word of Christ" and the singing of "psalms", "hymns", and "spiritual songs", favours our interpretation. By "the word of Christ", we understand the Scriptures; for He is the great Prophet of the Church, and by His Spirit men of old were qualified and moved to write the Scriptures, which emphatically treat of Him. Now it is safe to affirm that the indwelling of "the word" in the heart is more likely to result from the use of the inspired Psalms than from the use of uninspired hymns. When we sing the Psalms, we are singing the very word of Christ, and a part of it which sets forth with special vividness His character and work.

6. The epithet "spiritual" used by Paul in these texts would teach the Ephesians and Colossians, as it may us, that the songs authorized for use in worship are inspired songs.

There are those who think that this word "spiritual" is meant to qualify, or characterize, the three terms, "psalms," "hymns," and "songs," and it may be conceded that this view is not forbidden by the rules of Greek syntax. Certainly, however, these rules do not require it; and it strikes us unfavourably for this reason chiefly, that "psalms" at least would be understood to be spiritual, whatever that word may mean. The same could not be said of "songs"; for there were secular and convivial songs, which could not be called "spiritual", whether in the sense of "holy" or in the sense of "inspired". The word "hymn" also, like the word "psalm", but in a less degree than it, was identified with religion. Hence to guard against misconception the Apostle joins the defining word "spiritual" to the doubtful word "songs".

Now what is the import of this epithet "spiritual",

the English equivalent of the Greek word, πνευματικαῖς *(pneumatikais)*, used by the Apostle?

There are twenty-two occurrences in the Greek Testament of the adjective, πνευματικός *(pneumatikos)*; and it can scarcely be denied that in these instances some latitude of meaning attaches to it. In Ephesians 6, 12, for example, where we read, according to the Revised Version, of "spiritual hosts of wickedness", the word indicates the fact that the enemies meant are not flesh and blood, not material, but immaterial, entities.

Again, in 1 Corinthians 15, 44, the expression "a spiritual body" means, as the contrast in the verse shows, a body suited to the *pneuma*, or spirit. This may be called the physical meaning of the word. Generally, however, in the New Testament, the word is used to signify an immediate, supernatural product of the Holy Spirit. For example, in Romans 1, 11, the "spiritual gift" of which Paul writes, seems clearly to be a gift of the Holy Spirit conducing to the edification and comfort of believers. Paul could impart the gift only instrumentally. To impart it efficiently was the prerogative of the Holy Spirit.

In 1 Corinthians 2, 15, it is said, "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." The word "spiritual" in this occurrence is not, strictly speaking, equivalent to "pious" or "saintly", but to renewed and enlightened by the Spirit of God. True, a man renewed and enlightened by the Spirit is a pious, or saintly, man; but the aspect in which he is presented when described as "spiritual" is that of having life and discernment from the Holy Spirit. The contrast between the "natural" man and the "spiritual" man is equivalent to that expressed in John 3, 6—"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Be it observed that the songs spoken of in Ephesians 5, 19, and Colossians 3, 16, are styled "spiritual"; and just as a "spiritual" man is one *directly* made so by the Holy Spirit, and as a spiritual gift is directly imparted by the Spirit, so a spiritual song is one directly produced by the Spirit's agency, that is, an inspired song.

In this interpretation we are sustained by some of the most acute and accomplished Biblical scholars. Meyer, for instance, says that πνευματικός *(pneumatikos)* is equivalent to θεόπνευστος *(theopneustos)*, that is, God-breathed, or inspired.

Tholuck, in the Introduction to his Commentary on the Psalms, writes thus—"They", that is, the Psalms, "are referred to (Ephesians 5, 19, and Colossians 3, 16) in connection with 'spiritual songs', which latter are to be apprehended as songs suddenly *inspired* by the Holy Ghost."

Braune, author of the exposition of the Epistle to the Ephesians, which forms part of the General Commentary edited by Dr. Lange, says, "ᾠδαὶ πνευματικαί (ōdai pneumatikai) are spiritual songs in general, productions of the Holy Ghost in the department of poetry as regards form, out of the Christian life as regards substance." Further, he remarks, "'Spiritual' belongs to the undefined 'songs', not to 'psalms' and 'hymns', which are confessedly productions of the Holy Ghost; the word means precisely this, however, and not merely that Christian thoughts and feelings find expression therein."

Bishop Ellicott says that spiritual songs are "such as the Holy Spirit inspired and gave utterance to". *

Regard to brevity forbids further discussion; but the considerations which have been presented seem to us to warrant the conclusion that in Ephesians 5, 19, and Colossians 3, 16, no sanction is given to the use of uninspired songs in the worship of God, or, indeed, to the use of any others in that solemn exercise than those embraced in the Book of Psalms.

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* I feel impelled to present a few more testimonies, as kindly furnished me by my scholarly friend, Rev. John M'Naugher, D.D., Professor in the Allegheny Theological Seminary, Allegheny, Pennsylvania. They are as follows:—

Cremer, in his Biblico-Theological Lexicon (fourth English edition, p. 510), makes πνευματικός in this text (Ephesians 5, 19) to mean "determined by the Spirit", "produced by the Spirit".

Sanday, in his Commentary on Romans (p. 187), says that Paul gives to the law the epithet "spiritual" (πνευματικός), "which is equivalent to ascribing to it a *direct* Divine origin." Elsewhere (p. 181) Dr. Sanday says that "the law is spiritual in the sense of being Spirit-caused or Spirit-given".

Dr. James Denney, Professor of Theology, Glasgow, in the Expositor's Greek Testament (published in 1900), says of the phrase "ὁ νόμος πνευματικός", "the law comes from God, Who is Spirit, and it shares His nature: its affinities are Divine, not human."

Moule, on Romans 7 (Expositor's Bible), commenting on the same phrase, speaks of the law as "framed by the sure guidance of the Holy Spirit".

Thayer, in his Lexicon on πνευματικός, says of the ᾠδαί of Ephesians and Colossians, that they are "Divinely inspired and so redolent of the Holy Spirit".

Dr. Edward Robinson, treating, in his New Testament

Lexicon, of πνευματικός, says that the songs mentioned in Ephesians 5, 19, and Colossians 3, 16, were "composed in the Spirit".

NO DIVINE WARRANT FOR THE USE OF UNINSPIRED HYMNS IN THE ORDINANCE OF PRAISE.

By REV. JAMES H. LITTELL, Wheeling, West Virginia, U.S.A.

This subject is one of solemn importance to him who regards the will of God. Since God has given us an inspired Psalter to be used in praising Him, we believe that His appointment should be carefully observed.

Timidity on our part may have led us to over-scrupulousness in the matter of praise, for, perhaps, the use of uninspired songs may be a means of edification. Nevertheless, if we err, we err on the right side—our error is negative; while, if the singers of uninspired songs in God's worship are in error, their transgression is positive.

While disclaiming an entire condemnation of "hymn-singing" as a sin *per se*, we hold that there is a transgression and wrong in attempting to substitute human composition for the *Inspired Word* in the Ordinance of Praise.

But if there be any sufficient warrant for the use of uninspired songs in the Ordinance of Praise, such warrant must come from one of three sources, namely, from the *Example of Christ*, the *Teaching of Scripture*, or the *Practice of the Early Church*.

Let us briefly examine these three grounds.

I. The Example of Christ furnishes no sufficient warrant.

The example of our Lord is as authoritative as is His precept. His example, indeed, is precept in action; and, therefore, it speaks to us with all the authority of a direct command. At the close of the Passover, when the Lord's Supper was instituted, it is written, "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives."

The "hymn" which was always sung in connection with the Passover feast was the *Great Hallel*, consisting of the 113th to the 118th Psalms inclusive. The "hymn" used on that occasion was some portion of this sacred song, which was

familiar to them all; hence the term "hymn" may properly be used to denote a Psalm.

The latter days of our Lord were full of the Psalms. He died with a Psalm upon His lips.

It is thus established that our Lord Jesus did sing the Psalms of the Psalter. But not once is it even hinted at in the Scripture narrative that He used any other composition in praise. Had He and His disciples desired to sing other songs, they would have had to compose them; for it is an historic fact which no one will presume to deny, that there were no other sacred songs for religious worship in existence at that time. But why did not our Lord Jesus Himself compose songs, or direct their composition, if He meant there should be a departure from the Psalter which He used in praise? He gave other important directions to the Church, yet not one single song of His own composition, or composed by His direction, has been handed down to His followers. But we know He did sing praises; and the matter of His song must have been exclusively the Psalms.

We insist, therefore, that His example furnishes no warrant for the use of uninspired songs in the Ordinance of Praise.

II. The Word of God furnishes no such warrant.

The only rule to direct us in the worship of God is His Revealed Will. God honours *His Word*, and declares by the inspired Psalmist that He places it above all His name. To ancient Israel He said, "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Deut. 12, 32).

The Second Commandment, enacted with special reference to the purity and integrity of God's worship, begins with the very significant words, "Thou shalt not make unto thee." Here, as Dr. Owen has pointed out, "all making to ourselves is forbidden," though our making might seem to us to be very suitable to the worship of God. "The Second Commandment requireth the . . . . keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in His Word."

Our Lord's teaching confirms this. On one occasion He reproved the Pharisees for making the *washing of hands before meat* a religious rite. The reason for this reproof was because such a rite was not commanded, and, therefore, had no value as a religious service. "In vain", said He, "do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

The Psalms are called "the Songs of the Lord"—a phrase which carries with it the idea of Divine enactment. (1 Chron. 25, 7.)

In the Old Testament we read of definite instructions being given to God's people to sing these Psalms, as when David delivered into the hands of Asaph and his brethren a thanksgiving song, to be used on the occasion of the Ark's removal from the house of Obed-edom to Jerusalem; and this song was afterwards transferred to the Psalter, where it appears in the 96th, 105th, and 106th Psalms.

The reign of Hezekiah furnishes another example. Among the reform measures effected during his reign, was a return to the *Songs of the Sanctuary*. He commanded the Levites "to sing praises unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer".

Nor is the New Testament silent on this matter; for, in at least two passages, namely, Eph. 5, 19, and Col. 3, 16, the use of the Psalms in the Service of Praise is definitely enjoined. The Apostle gives this command for the guidance of the Christians at Colosse, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." And he enjoins the Church at Ephesus thus: "Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

It is observable that these three terms, "psalms," "hymns," and "spiritual songs," are the very titles used to designate the different songs of the Hebrew Psalter.

Some imagine a difficulty here. The objection of Archbishop Trench that the word *Psalmois* does not have the article, and, therefore, does not mean the Book of Psalms, is answered thus: The noun denoting anything so familiar as were the Psalms, passed without the use of the article. Others take a great deal of trouble to show that the words, "psalms," "hymns," and "spiritual songs," represent different forms of poetical composition, of which we have only examples in the Psalter. But the term "spiritual" here signifies *having a Divine source*. The order in the original language is, "psalms," "hymns," and "songs spiritual," or *not of an earthly origin*. Therefore, the expression, "spiritual songs," means *songs inspired by the Holy Spirit;* and, standing in the same class with the term "psalms", it clearly limits these "songs" to those found in the Hebrew Psalter.

The term "hymn" is shown by the illustration from the life of our Lord to refer to the psalms: "When they had sung an hymn." The same fact is established by this term being used as co-ordinate with the terms, "psalms" and "spiritual songs." Moreover, the expression, "the word of Christ," which stands in apposition to the three terms, "psalms,"

"hymns," and "songs spiritual," proves beyond question that each of these must be inspired.

We are, therefore, taught here that if we would *sing with grace in our hearts to the Lord*, we must use compositions so distinctly *spiritual* that they may be spoken of, as in Colossians, as "the word of Christ". And the singing of these Divine songs with grace in the heart will, as the Ephesians are taught, be an evidence that we are being "filled with the Spirit".

The direct testimony of God's Word is limited to these few passages; and not only does it furnish *no warrant*, but by fair inference it *excludes* uninspired composition from the worship of God.

III. The practice of the early Church furnishes no warrant.

In the early ages of Christianity, and for centuries afterwards, only inspired songs were used in the worship of God. The inspired Psalter was not merely read, as other parts of Scripture, for *edification*, but was *sung* or chanted in solemn worship.

The citations here must of necessity be limited.

In the *Apostolical Constitutions* which portray the customs of the Church from the time of the Apostles to the fourth century, we are told that "the women, the children, and the humblest labourers could repeat all the Psalms of David. They chanted them at home and abroad; and thus exercised their piety, and refreshed their minds".

In this *Constitution*, which partook partly of the character of a "directory for worship", particular instructions are given as to the use of the Psalms.

A few extracts may be of interest as showing the condition of the Church in regard to the use of Psalmody in that age. This advice is addressed to such as might be absent from public worship: "If thou stayest at home, read the Book of the Law, with the kings and the prophets, and sing the Hymns of David." Note that the Psalms are here called *hymns*, as in Ephesians and Colossians.

Again: "If thou desirest something to sing, thou hast the Psalms."

In Book II., sec. 29, we read: "But assemble yourselves together every day, morning and evening, singing Psalms and praying in the Lord's House; in the morning saying the 63rd Psalm, and in the evening the 140th Psalm; but principally on the Sabbath day."

Tertullian, about the end of the second or beginning of the third century, plainly states that in religious gatherings Christians were in the habit of singing Psalms.

Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople (born A.D. 347; died

407), bears testimony to the prevalence of Psalm-singing in his time. He signifies that the Psalms were used by all classes and on all occasions. He says, "When they" (the Christians) "hold their vigils all night in the Church, David's Psalms are in the beginning, and middle, and end of all their service." "David is always in their mouths, not only in the cities and churches, but in the courts, in the mountains, in the deserts, in the wilderness."

Occasionally a "hymn" of human composition was introduced into the service of the Church as early as the 3rd century, on the responsibility of the minister in charge. But in the words of Dr. Killen, in his "Ancient Church", "The practice was regarded with suspicion, and seems to have been considered irregular. Hence, Paul of Samosata, in the Council of Antioch, held A.D. 269, was blamed for discontinuing the Psalms formerly used, and for establishing a new and very exceptionable hymnology." In this way, this brilliant representative of early heresy hoped to propagate the Unitarian views that, for selfish reasons, he did not care to openly declare at once.

Other errorists took the same plan to circulate their false teachings, thus leading many astray.

This is the origin of "hymn-singing" in the Church; and the evil effects of this practice are seen through the centuries, and to-day in the *defective* or superficial views of Divine truth held, and in an almost universal failure to recognize the claims of Christ to the supreme loyalty of His professed followers!

To the long array of evidence that might be produced, the fact may be mentioned here that in the Council of Laodicea, held about A.D. 360, it was decreed that no psalms composed by uninspired men should be used in the Church service.

A great deal more might be quoted. But enough has been advanced to show that even from the age of the Apostles, the Church used the Divine Psalter in singing the praises of God. And further, in the early Church, and for centuries after the time of the Apostles, the Psalms were, at least, the matter *chiefly* used in the Service of Praise.

It has never been proved that any compositions, other than those contained in the Psalter, were sung or chanted in the ordinary worship of the early Church.

Therefore, rather than giving ground to support the use of uninspired songs, it can be easily and fearlessly said—the practice of the early Christian Church furnishes no warrant for the use of uninspired hymns in the Ordinance of Praise.

And now, not less noticeable is the fact that in every age the Psalter has proved itself sufficient to meet the varied needs of believers.

The pious Ambrose, in the fourth century, wrote, "The law instructs, history informs, prophecy predicts, correction censures, and morals exhort: but in the Book of Psalms you find the fruit of all these, as well as a remedy for the salvation of the soul."

Dr. Perowne, in the *Nineteenth Century*, writes, "The Psalter is the only entire book in the Bible which God has given expressly to aid and guide the worship of man; and while adapted to every capacity in its range of experience, it includes every case, from the depth of penitential remorse, to the fullest and most exalting realization of God's friendship."

Dr. Joseph Cook said, "The Psalms are the mid-pillar in the Divine cathedral of the Scripture, or rather, a whole transcript of pillars. Three thousand years they have been the highest manual of devotion among men. Nothing like them can be found in all antiquity! Greece has spoken! Rome has had the ear of the ages! Modern time has uttered all its voices: but the Psalms remain wholly unsurpassed!"

And so we might go on at any length. But look at these Songs of the Soul! Their own contents would declare that all other compositions should be ruled out as having no place in the Ordinance of Praise.

Where can you find purer thought, or more majestic sentiment? Where find greater pathos of devotion, or deeper confession of sin? Where more of the spirit of worship, or a greater joy over pardon, or a loftier adoration, or a clearer conception of God?

Name, if you can, a single holy principle that cannot be found in these Hebrew Psalms, or an aspiration, or a doctrine, or a noble type of life, or a blessed experience of the immortal soul, or any other subject whatever calling for praise. *It is all here!*

These Psalms constitute the richest devotional reading in the world. They are filled with the intensest religious feeling. They express the soul's most ardent longings. They abound in the sublimest imagery and loftiest poetic symbols. They reveal with wonderful fulness the struggles and doubts, the hope and trust, the sorrows and joys of the human heart.

How many times in the hours of struggle and trial have the words, "Be still, and know that I am God," calmed the rebellious, excited spirit?

These Poems, indited by the Spirit of God, and born of human experience and the soul's deepest longings, have associated themselves, like rain and sunshine, with persons in all conditions of life, and *prove* to be an adequate expression of their feelings, and an inestimable source of strength and support. They are adapted to every vicissitude of life.

They deserve to be called, the Praise of God; the Glory of Man; the Voice of the Church; and the most beneficial Confession of Faith. Could they be heard, with voice like the sound of many waters, they would declare that no other songs find a warrant for being used in the solemn worship and praise of the living God.

DISCUSSION.

Rev. Professor Dick, M.A., D.D., Belfast, Ireland, said—I do not wish to discuss the last Paper, but to say a word or two on points suggested by some of the previous Papers. With regard to the translation of Ephesians 5, 19, and Colossians 3, 16, it may be said that the word *Psalmos* of itself determines nothing, for it means originally the twanging of an instrument, then a song; nor does the word *Humnos* determine anything, for it is simply a song in honour of Deity, heroes, or conquerers; nor does the word *Odē* determine anything, for it is a song of any kind. This much, however, seems certain, that if the word "*psalmois*" had meant the Book of Psalms, it would have had *the article*, and would not have been co-ordinated indefinitely with uninspired compositions. The expression would doubtless have been, "*the* Psalms," or, "the Book of Psalms," if the "hymns" and "songs" had meant compositions of a wholly different kind. We must ascertain the exact meaning of the three terms employed by considering the scope of the passages in which they are used, and the context in which they stand.

I can see very good reason for the omission of *the article* before "*psalmois*" if the three terms all refer to the Book of Psalms. Let us note how they are prefaced in Colossians 3, 16—"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Does not this imply that the Colossians will then be able to sing the psalms, hymns, and songs, which are the inspired songs of the Word of Christ? We can well understand that *the article* must be omitted before "*psalmois*" for the very reason that the word "psalm" has a general meaning there, and not a specific meaning, as applied to the Book.

Then I pass to consider the question of the application of the word "spiritual" to all the three terms, to which reference is made in Dr. Harper's Paper. He has said

that the word "spiritual" may grammatically qualify all three words, that is to say, "spiritual psalms, hymns, and songs." He says that it *may on grammatical grounds*, but is *not required* on grammatical grounds. Well, I am inclined to go further than this. I think if it is admissible on grammatical grounds, it can be shown to be *required* on other grounds, namely, exegetical, or soundly expository grounds. The Greek word "*pneumatikais*" agrees in form with the word "songs", but comes after the three words, "psalms," "hymns," and "songs." In accordance with the well-known rule of Greek syntax, if an adjective is to qualify a number of nouns, it either precedes or follows, and is in the form of the nearest noun. In this case it follows all three nouns, and is in the form of the last. But, as I have said, whatever may be said about grammatical grounds, it is clear that it is necessary on the grounds of the proper exegesis of these passages, that the adjective "spiritual" should be applied to qualify all three words. If the word "spiritual" be confined to the word "songs", then you will have the two other terms unqualified, which would imply that the Ephesian and Colossian converts might sing any kind of "psalms" or "hymns" they liked; but if they sang "songs", these must be "spiritual". That would seem to me to be wholly unwarrantable. Suppose again that you take the word "psalms", as some of our opponents do, to mean inspired Psalms, then of the three terms, "psalms," "hymns," and "songs," you have the word "psalms", meaning the Book of Psalms. Then you have the word "songs" qualified by the word "spiritual", or inspired; but what becomes of the "hymns" in the middle? Where do you get them from? On this supposition they are neither out of the Book of Psalms, nor are they "spiritual". Then what are you to do with them? Are they "hymns" to heathen deities? or are they any hymns to be sung at the festive seasons of the heathen world? or are they hymns that are neither inspired nor spiritual in any sense? Now I repeat that for the proper exposition of the passages, we are required to apply the word "spiritual" to all the terms here, and our conclusion must be that we are required to praise God in the psalms and hymns and songs of inspiration, and that there is no other possible exegesis that will sufficiently limit the word "hymns".

There was one point referred to in the admirable Paper read by the Rev. J. H. Littell, a point that is of vast importance on this question, and that was his statement that Christ "died with a Psalm upon His lips". The moral force of that is almost inestimable. One wonders that anyone can overlook the remarkable fact that Christ in His sufferings expresses Himself in the words of the first verse of the 22nd Psalm, and

at the end of His sufferings expresses Himself in the words of the last verse of that Psalm, "that He hath done it," which corresponds with His dying words, "It is finished." I think the moral force of this solemn fact ought to be sufficient to silence for ever foolish objectors to the Psalms, and all those who would introduce some other songs to honour Christ.

There is one other point suggested by Dr. Harper's Paper to which I may refer in conclusion. The close of the 72nd Psalm is in these words: "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended." I presume it was because that expression was employed as it is employed in our translation at the end of the Psalm that the 72nd Psalm was called "a Psalm *for* Solomon", and not attributed *to* Solomon as the writer of it. The Hebrew as distinctly attributes this Psalm to Solomon, as it attributes other Psalms to David. If we regard as a mere closing note the expression, "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended," then it must have been intended to refer to the particular division of the Psalms ending there, and not to that particular composition which was not written by David, but by Solomon. It appears, however, to my mind that the expression ought to be rendered not as a mere concluding note, but as part of the Psalm itself—"The prayers of David, the son of Jesse," *have reached their consummation here.* In what? "Let the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amen, and Amen"; and that Solomon sets his seal, or adds his "amen", to that prayer, or those prayers of David, the scope and end of which was that the glory of the Lord God of Israel should fill the whole earth.

Rev. Professor Petticrew, M.A., D.Lit., D.D., Londonderry, Ireland, said—In the Septuagint version, with which the Apostle was familiar, and which was in the hands of the Ephesian and Colossian converts, the reading at the end of the 72nd Psalm is, "The *hymns* of David, the son of Jesse, are ended;" so that, according to that version, from which the Saviour and the Apostles so frequently quoted, some of the one hundred and fifty pieces of the Psalter are "hymns", while others are "psalms", and others "songs". In the 100th Psalm we are exhorted to "enter into His [the Lord's] courts with hymns" (*en humnois*); and at the time of the reformation under Hezekiah, we are told (2 Chronicles 29, 30) that "Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing hymns [*humnein*] unto the Lord". That these hymns were part of the Book of Psalms is shown by what follows, for the command was, "to sing hymns unto the Lord *in the words of David, and of Asaph the seer.*" Who, then, can reasonably doubt that it was in the Psalter that the Apostle

meant his Ephesian and Colossian converts to find the "hymns" that he directed them to sing in praise to God?

There is another point that I wish to emphasize. It is this: Whatever the hymns referred to in Ephesians and Colossians are—whether inspired, as we contend; or uninspired, as our friends on the other side contend—their use was enjoined by the Apostle. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." That is a command. It is not that these uninspired hymns, if they were uninspired, *may* be used; it is that they *must* be used. In both passages it is an inspired direction or command. If, then, as our friends on the other side tell us, it was uninspired hymns that the Colossian and Ephesian converts were directed by the Apostle to sing in praise to God, the singing of uninspired hymns is binding. They do not, however, themselves act upon that supposition; in other words, they do not in fact believe their own contention.

Now, whatever position these friends may take up for controversial purposes, their consciences tell them, as Christian men, that inspired Psalms and uninspired hymns are not, after all, in the same category, and that they do not come to us with the same authority. Sir, you may take the inspired Psalter to every nation under heaven, and you may tell every people under heaven that it is their bounden duty as well as their privilege to sing in the worship of God the Psalms that are in that Book. But not even the hymn-singers themselves would say that they could go to every nation under heaven with a book of uninspired hymns in their hands, and say to the people truly, It is a binding obligation upon you before God to sing the uninspired hymns that are in this hymnal, whether the compilation be Sankey's, or that of the Methodists, or that of the Presbyterians, or that of the Congregationalists, or even the High Church compilation, "Hymns Ancient and Modern," from which the others are so largely drawn. There is, indeed, no comparison between the two things—between inspired compositions and uninspired compositions. Everything that real inspiration covers is as high above the uninspired as the heavens are above the earth.

Before closing, let me ask a question, and any of our friends who believe it their duty to use uninspired hymns in the worship of God instead of the Psalms may answer it. Supposing it is the singing of uninspired hymns that is enjoined, commanded, prescribed by the Apostle, the question I want to ask is this: *What* uninspired hymns are they that we are commanded to sing? Is it all uninspired hymns—uninspired

hymns in general—that are intended by the Apostle, and that we are bound to sing? If so, that is a large order, for there are said to be about 600,000 uninspired hymns in existence. Is the singing of all these binding? There are probably 100,000 uninspired hymns in the English language. Is the singing of all these obligatory? Even our most ardent hymn-singers will hardly answer in the affirmative. Well, if not, will they kindly tell us which of the 600,000 it is obligatory on the people of God in all kingdoms and nations to sing? It is exceedingly necessary that they should without delay settle this question, and let us know exactly which of the 600,000 uninspired hymns, if not all, it is every one's duty to sing in praise to God, seeing that the Apostle absolutely enjoined the singing of whatever "hymns" are referred to in the passages in Ephesians and Colossians, and that it is the singing of uninspired hymns that they understand him to have enjoined.

PRAISE—Psalm 119, 140-144.

THE HYMNALS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN AND OTHER CHURCHES: THEIR FORM, ERRORS, AND TENDENCIES.

On this subject no paper was presented. In the absence of a paper, the REV. JOSEPH CORKEY, LL.D., Glendermot, Londonderry, Ireland, has, at the request of the SECRETARIES, supplied the following note:—

The appearance of "Hymns Ancient and Modern" may be said to have formed an epoch in Hymnal compilation. That book, the first edition of which was issued in 1861, was avowedly prepared in the interest of the Ritualistic and Romanizing party in the Church of England. It was drawn largely from Roman Breviaries and Missals. Of 273 pieces in the first edition, 118 were from Roman sources. Other pieces were composed for the book by High Church Anglicans. The work has been gradually enlarged and now contains upwards of 600 hymns. It still bears the impress stamped on it at the first. Its design was to familiarize the minds of the

people with Romish phraseology and doctrine, and to train them for the reception of full-blown Popish teaching. Well has the book served the object of its compilers. Romanizers boast of its success: Evangelical men deplore the injury it has done the cause of Gospel truth. Rev. J. Ormiston says, "It teaches Mariolatry, idolatry, transubstantiation, baptismal regeneration, prayer for the dead, and salvation by human works. The *tone* of the book, as a whole, is decidedly Popish." And Bishop Perowne, observing how largely the book had borrowed from Romish sources, adds, "I believe the book has done more than almost anything else to foster Ritualistic and Romish tendencies in our Church." All this has its lesson for us.

But the great outstanding fact is that all the later Presbyterian hymnals, all those now in use in the Presbyterian Churches in these countries, *are modelled on and very largely borrowed from this Ritualistic book.* Before the date of its appearance hymnals in non-Episcopal Churches were taken almost entirely from Evangelical and Protestant sources. Since then it has become the fashion—and, in hymn-singing, *fashion* dominates—to stuff hymnals with pieces from the writings of Ritualists and Romanists. Fully half of the material in some Presbyterian hymnals we have examined is taken from such sources. These sources colour and give tone and tendency to all the hymnals lately compiled, and, very notably, to the "Church Hymnary".

We know it is said that we are to take good hymns from any source where we can get them. Our reply is, first, that we object in the strongest possible way to conferring special honour on the names and writings of men who are mainly notorious for their departures from the faith. Many perverts from Protestantism to Popery, such as Newman, Faber, Oakley, Collins, Bridges, &c., have their names and writings honoured, and their fame, as eminently holy men, spread among the people. We protest against so honouring and exalting these men, who lent their name and their abilities to strengthen and commend a foul system such as Popery, which is everywhere the bitter and unscrupulous opponent of the Gospel of Christ. Where does God command His Church to sing in His praise the songs of the enemies of His truth? Blessed be His holy name, He never laid such a burden on His children.

But, in the second place, we object to hymns from Anglican and Popish sources, because such writings are unwholesome in their tendency, and, however expurgated, are deleterious in much of their teaching. The *tone* of these writings does not favour Evangelical truth, and cannot but be inimical to sound doctrine. The compositions of Romanizers and of Popish

priests, such as abound in the "Church Hymnary", give one-sided and perverted views of truth and of the Christian life, and not infrequently inculcate or insinuate, as has been demonstrated, positive error. These are some of the grounds on which we object to borrowing the material which we are to offer in the sacrifice of praise to the Almighty from the songs of Ritualists, Romanizers, and Papists. All the songs of inspiration were written by "holy men of God" who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost". We challenge those who disparage the Psalms to find us a line in the Book which was written by an enemy of God's truth.

As to the "literary inferiority" of hymns, it is admitted by hymn-singers themselves that much in their compilations is "mere trash". One of the most ardent defenders of hymns says, "Much in Presbyterian hymnals is effusions of false sentiment or profane familiarity, and, through poverty of thought and looseness of literary form, is unworthy a place in a book of congregational song." One of the compilers of this "Hymnary", which is now being forced on the congregations of our Church [*] despite the protests of many of the best of our people, has publicly stated that many of the pieces in the book are "poor, thin, jejune, vapid, vulgar". The statement of Albert Barnes, himself a hymn-singer, is that there is much in hymn-books "so flat, so weak, so unpoetic, that it would not, in a volume of mere poetry, be admitted to a third or fourth rank, if, indeed, it would find a place at all". Such is the stuff which self-willed men are now compelling God's people to sing instead of His own Psalms, which are replete with spiritual truth, which inculcate no error, and which, as literary productions, are of incomparable excellence.

WHY IS THERE NO PSALTER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

By REV. JOSEPH CORKEY, LL.D., Glendermot, Londonderry, Ireland.

It will not, I presume, be denied that we have no book of sacred song in the New Testament Scriptures. The so-called hymns of Elizabeth, Mary, and Zacharias, even if we admit they were intended for the purpose of song in the Church,

* The Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

would not furnish out a Psalter; nor are they, strictly speaking, "New Testament hymns," as they were spoken under the Old Dispensation and before the Advent. To some the question may appear unnecessary, and even somewhat audacious. I accept the Divine appointment of the Psalms for purposes of praise; but I think we can show the reasonableness of the appointment, and vindicate why no addition to the Psalter was given or required.

There are, practically, only two replies to the question. One is, that it was left to the Christian Church to provide a literature of song for herself; the other, that the inspired Psalms are adapted to the position and circumstances of the New Dispensation, and that they furnish full and adequate material of surpassing excellence for the service of song. As the latter part of the second reply—the fulness and sufficiency of the Psalms—is to be dealt with in a separate paper, I shall dwell mainly on the adaptedness of the Psalms to the New Testament Church and their fitness for serving all the purposes of praise in song.

I call attention first to the fact that the Church is the same under all dispensations. The Redeemer of men, the salvation provided, and all the essential elements of true religion are throughout all time the same. The Apostles frequently declared that all that they preached was in accordance with the Old Testament, and to it they often referred in support of every doctrine they taught. Paul affirmed that he taught "none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come". When summarizing his teaching to the Corinthian Church, he said it was all "according to the Scriptures". In the words of Dr. C. Hodge, "There is not a doctrine concerning Christ taught in the New Testament which the Apostles did not affirm to be revealed under former dispensations." Speaking of its ethical teaching, on account of which the Old Testament is often attacked, Rothe says, "The ethics of the Old Testament and of the New Testament are perfectly identical." Now, the Psalms being an epitome of all spiritual truth revealed in the Old Testament, we find all doctrines regarding Christ—regarding His person, His work, His people—delineated in the Book. As Jesus was Jehovah, all the saving acts ascribed in the Psalms to Jehovah were mediated through the Son, and through the Son as destined to be incarnate. In all the actings of the Mediator from the beginning, He acted, and was revealed, as the God-man, which He was in the purpose and decree of the Father. He was set forth as the Son of Man in all the offices He discharges. He is the ideal righteous Man described in so many Psalms.

He is the Priest Who offers a perfect sacrifice, the King fairer than the children of men, the faithful Prophet Who preaches righteousness in the great congregation. Such delineations, in all their integrity and fulness, are true of only one of the sons of men. They describe, and were intended, by the Spirit through Whom they were given, to describe, the Lord Jesus Christ. "Search the Scriptures," says Christ, for "they are they which testify of Me"—of *Me*, the Son of Man, the incarnate Christ. Again He said, after His resurrection, speaking of the Old Testament Scriptures, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." The whole history of the chosen people with its varied types, its law, and its prophecies, is a setting forth of Himself. The whole delineated Him: the whole was fulfilled in Him. In the Psalms the Church also is described in her various aspects and varied fortunes.

It is said there are two hundred and eighty-three quotations from the Old Testament in the New, and of these, one hundred and sixteen—well-nigh one-half—are from the Psalms. Now, these quotations from the Psalms are invariably applied not to David and his life, but to Christ and His Kingdom. Every word said in them of redemption, of a redeemed people, and of their attitude to their Redeemer, is now in all its fulness applicable to the New Testament Church. This has been the testimony of the Church all along the line of her history. Matthew Henry merely sums up the views of Evangelical writers when he says, "So much is there in it [the Psalter] of Christ and His Gospel, as well as of God and His law, that it has been called *the abstract, or summary, of both Testaments*." One of the latest writers on the subject, Professor Robertson of Glasgow, says, "The Psalter is indeed a New Testament work. Its pieces have been felt to be Christian hymns, expressing the feelings, attitudes, and relations which are cardinal to Christianity." Bishop Westcott writes, "The Psalter, in its spiritual fulness, belongs to no special time." "The Psalms", says Canon Driver, "from their variety, are fitted to be the hymn-book, not only of the second temple, but of the Christian Church." Such are the testimonies of unprejudiced writers of every school of Christian thought.

It displays the grossest ignorance to speak of the Psalms as "Jewish and antiquated", as if they had waxed old and passed away like the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic system. The usual designation, the Old and the New Testament, applied to God's Revealed Will, is not a Scriptural distinction: it is imperfect and is liable to be misunderstood. "Old" may convey the idea of antiquity, as if it was out of date and had passed away. It is of all Scripture that it is

affirmed, "The Word of the Lord abideth for ever." It all has its lessons for us. The Old Testament is full of Gospel, full of Christ, full of atonement, full of moral and spiritual truth by which the Spirit saves and sanctifies men. What is there "Jewish" or "antiquated" in the 1st Psalm, in the 23rd, in the 25th, in the 90th, in the 103rd, or, indeed, in any of the Psalms? They contain truth as important for us of to-day as for those who lived three thousand years ago. Well did the late Dr. Blaikie say, "The Psalms have stood their ground for millenniums, and have been welcomed with fresh delight in every quarter of the globe by men of every tribe and people and tongue. Of what other sacred songs can this be said?" The average life of a modern hymnal, we are told on good authority, is fifteen years!

It is true, there is figurative language in the Psalms, figures taken from the Old Economy. This, which is sometimes urged as an objection against the use of the Psalms, forms really one of their excellencies. To the Christian acquainted with the Word of God, there is no more difficulty in understanding these figures than there is in understanding those taken from social life, from war, or from the material world. Such figurative language abounds in the New Testament. If you take away such figures as Israel, temple, priest, altar, sacrifice, house of God, &c., you destroy the very means by which God has been pleased to convey to men a knowledge of His salvation. The whole Jewish economy spake of Christ: and the prophets, priests, and kings of Israel were not merely types of the Perfect One Who was to come, but they were, for the time that then was, the visible human mediators of the revelation of salvation, and in and through them the one Mediator, the Son of God, was working and teaching His Church. The truth revealed was for them, and for us, and for all the world. It was because of this peculiar relation in which these men stood to Christ that such delineations of Christ as we have in the Psalms could be mediated. David, for instance, pre-eminently known as the "sweet psalmist" of Israel, was Jehovah's theocratic king, the chosen of the Lord, anointed to rule over Israel. In writing his Psalms, *he knew* that he was speaking of the Messiah Whom God had promised to raise up of his seed to sit on his throne.

The Psalms grew out of a sanctified human experience, and so are often uttered in the first person. But David was enabled by the Spirit, through Whom he spake, to describe an ideal righteous man, an ideal sufferer, an ideal king. A character was thus depicted which was fully realized only in the incarnate Son of God. In Him is found every element of the ideal portrayed in the Psalms. Because of this peculiar

relationship, and because Christ was working through them, the writers of the Psalms were able to speak not merely of His sufferings, of His character, and of the opposition He met with in the world, but to depict also the inner experiences of His soul. Dr. Cooke has truly said, "There is one view of Christ . . . . that can be discovered only in the Book of Psalms—I mean His inward life. No eye-witness of the outward man, though an inspired Evangelist, could penetrate the heart. But the Spirit Who 'searcheth the deep things of God' has, in the Psalms, laid open the inmost thoughts, sorrows, and conflicts of our Lord. The Evangelists faithfully and intelligently depict the Sinless Man; the Psalms alone lay open the heart of the Man of Sorrows." Even inspired Apostles did not stand in the same representative, theocratic relation to Christ as did the royal Psalmist and the prophets who penned the Psalms. Christ in His wisdom did not see fit to delineate for us the actings and the exercises of His human soul in His communing with the Father. He used the Psalms; He found Himself delineated in them: He sang them, quoted them, expounded them to His disciples, and died with the words of a Psalm upon His lips. "In the Book of Psalms", says Luther, "we have not the life of the saints only, but we have the experience of Christ Himself, the Head of all the saints; so we may truly call the Psalms a little Bible." As delineating the Perfect One in His offices and varied relations, the Psalms were fitted for giving utterance to His devotions and His feelings toward His Father. We are called to be conformed to the image of the Son of God. How can we so well grow into His likeness as by meditating on and using those songs which nurtured His inner life and which delineate Him as the Perfect Man, the Sinless Saviour, the Holy One of God? "The voice of Christ and His Church", says Augustine, "was well-nigh the only voice to be heard in the Psalms." His people take the book and sing along with Him. What Dr. A. Bonar says of the 63rd Psalm will apply to almost the whole book—"This is a psalm for David, a psalm for the Son of David, a psalm for the Church in every age, a psalm for every member of the Church in this weary land." The question for us is, Shall we cease to sing the experiences of the Perfect One, in order that we may sing the experiences, I do not say of erring and fallible men, but the experiences and the teaching of errorists and heretics, with which our modern hymnals are filled?

If it be said that much in the Psalms is local and temporary, I reply much of the teaching in the New Testament was connected with events that were local and temporary; but all Christians are agreed that it has its teaching for us. So it is

with the Psalms; the events and the personal experiences in them all have their lessons for the Church in succeeding ages. What Paul says of the events in the wilderness is applicable to the whole history of the Israel of God: "These things happened unto them by way of example [*Margin*, figure]; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come." Why should we sing of the trials, the conflicts, the victories, the failures of Israel? *Because they have their lessons for us—much needed lessons.* Nay, more, these songs are our songs; we have entered into the instructions, blessings, and promises contained in them. The victories of Israel were our victories. We are the Israel of God. "Ye", says the Apostle, "are come unto Mount Zion." We are the true circumcision; we are not strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the people of God. All the privileges bestowed, all the blessings promised in the Psalms, are for us, and are as suited to us as to Israel of old. It is reckoned no wrong for patriots to celebrate the victories of preceding times. Paul, writing to the Corinthian Church, says, "I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, how that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea." We were with God's people of old in their varied experiences. Had there been no deliverance from Egypt, there had been no Church of God to-day. Had any of the many enemies that assailed Israel succeeded in destroying her, the cause of truth and righteousness would have perished from the earth. Their victories were our victories, and their songs our songs. We cannot consent to give up our part in the heritage of blessings which comes to us through the kings and prophets and people of Israel.

I quoted someone as saying that the Psalter "has become a New Testament book". Indeed, if we are to use that distinction, it is more a New Testament book than an Old Testament one. We know more of its meaning than could the Old Testament Church. What Peter says of prophecy in general, and more especially of prophecies regarding the sufferings and glories of Christ, applies to the prophetic delineations in the Psalms. Speaking of the Old Testament prophets, the Apostle says, "To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but *unto you*, did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the Gospel unto you." They were made to perceive that their predictions would be better understood and would be more useful to those who lived under the Messiah. We know more fully the meaning of the Psalms. We read them in the light of all subsequent revelation, in the light of the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, and in the light which His

own teaching and that of His Apostles cast upon them. Reading them thus we find they are neither obscure nor gloomy, antiquated nor Jewish. Why should we draw over them the veil which has been "done away in Christ"? Reading them thus, multitudes have found with Bishop Horsley that "there is not a page in the Book in which the pious reader will not find Christ, if He reads with a view of finding Him". As an old writer puts it, *Psalmorum clavis Christi fides*, which Dr. Alexander renders, "the golden key of the Psalter lies in a pierced hand." Speaking of the Psalms as a New Testament Book, Bishop Wordsworth truly observes, "The universality of the Psalter is evident from this consideration; every other book of the Old Testament has its counterpart in the New. The Books of Moses and the other historical books have their correspondents in the Gospels and the Acts; the didactic books have theirs in the Epistles; the prophets have theirs in the Apocalypse; but the Psalter has no echo in the New Testament. It belongs to both Testaments. It speaks of Christ and Christ speaks in it. It is the Hymn-book of the universal Church." Coleridge's illustration is well known. He wrote on the margin of his prayer-book, "As a transparency on some night of public rejoicing, seen by common day, with the lamps from within removed, even such would the Psalms be to me uninterpreted by the Gospel." The simile might be extended. The Jews saw the Psalms only partially lighted: we see them illuminated with all the fulness and glory of Him Who is "the Light of the World".

These are not the conclusions of narrow-minded bigots or of men blinded by prejudices and prepossessions. They are the conclusions of the most eminent of the Fathers, of the leading Reformers, of distinguished scholars and theologians, and of the foremost literary men of their time. Let me quote only one more testimony, that of a distinguished literary man, who was also a careful and diligent student of God's Word. The late Isaac Taylor, in his work, "On the Spirit of the Hebrew Poetry," says, "There can be little risk of error in affirming that the New Testament itself furnishes no liturgy of devotion, for this reason, that a liturgy, Divinely originated, had already been granted to the universal Church; and it was such in its subjects, and in its tone, and its modes of expression, as fully to satisfy its destined purpose." Again, the same writer says, "As to the powers of sacred poetry, these powers were expanded to the full, and were quite expended, too, by the Hebrew bards. What are modern hymns but so many laborious attempts to put in a new form that which, as it was done in the very best manner so many

ages ago, can never be well done again, otherwise than in the way of a verbal repetition."

This, then, is our reply to the question with which we started. A Book of sacred song already existed, given by God, which celebrated the praises of Jehovah as the God of salvation in all His varied relations to men, depicted all the great themes of redemption, describing the person and work of the Redeemer, the glories and blessings of His Mediatorial reign, and also the calling, the character, and the work of His Church, and her universal extension. There was no need for a second Psalter. He Who could have made every Apostle a David, Himself sang the Psalms of David.

To the other reply that is made to the question, "Why is there no Psalter in the New Testament?" there are two strong grounds of exception. In the first place, the contention that the Church in each age ought to make its own Psalter, derogates from the faithfulness of Christ as a Son, and as Lord, "over His own House". We know Christ was faithful as Ruler and Lawgiver of the Church. As the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, He was faithful to Him that appointed Him. In revealing the will of God and instituting Ordinances of Worship, He acted with fidelity. What can be more important to the Church than the songs by which her children are to be edified and the praises of God celebrated? What can be more influential in moulding the spiritual life of God's people? Had another Psalter or a supplement to the Psalter been required, Christ would have failed in faithfulness if He had not provided a complete manual of praise, but had left it to be provided by every chance writer of religious verse. Much in our hymn-books is admitted by hymn-singers themselves to be mere trash—poor, thin, vapid, vulgar trash.

Then, in the second place, if Christ, as the Head of Ordinances, gave authority to the Church to compose her own material of song, He undoubtedly made provision for having His own Ordinance of singing Psalms set aside altogether; for man's hymns invariably push out God's Hymns. When you lay aside the Psalms you cast out the ordinance, which is God's Ordinance. But a mode of worship which sets aside any of the means appointed by Christ for the edification of His Church must be false worship. Most corruptions of worship have been additions to Divine Ordinances. It is one of the greatest grievances in connection with hymns, that they set aside the Divine Ordinance altogether. If it be said, as it has been said, you have still the Psalms to read, our reply is: The Psalms were given *to be sung*, and thereby to edify the Church and promote spiritual life. But the argument for read-

ing can be turned the other way. We say to those who are fond of hymns and cry up their excellencies: *Read* your hymns, and be edified thereby. If they answered honestly, they would say: "Thank you! When we feel inclined to read for spiritual edification, we never go to the hymn-book."

That the Psalms should be put aside and discarded altogether is a necessary consequence of the introduction of hymns. The great obstacle in the way of the introduction of hymns into worship has always been *the existence of the Book of Psalms.* It was in occupation; and it must, in some way, be got rid of. Hence the Psalms are disparaged, their excellencies made light of, and their application to Christ and to the things of the Gospel denied. They are represented as obscure, gloomy, antiquated, Jewish, fit only for the worship of a worldly sanctuary; and, being thus misunderstood and misrepresented, the way is soon prepared for getting rid of them altogether. Besides, there is no doubt that hymns are more congenial to human nature than the Psalms. Men write hymns to please themselves, to express their own thoughts, musings, and experiences about religious truth: in the Psalms you have the thoughts of God on all the great themes relating to sin and salvation. Man naturally prefers his own thoughts when told that, as material of praise, these are much more edifying and much more acceptable than the Psalms. They are more acceptable to man, certainly; they make less demand on his intellect, his conscience, and his heart, than the living, powerful, searching Word of God. The question is, Are they more acceptable to the great Object of worship than His own Psalms? It is very suggestive that for two thousand years no Christian man has assailed either the literary excellence or the spiritual teaching of the Psalms, except hymn-singers when seeking to supplant them with their own productions.

Then, the introduction of hymns is like the breaking out of water. At first one or two are used in a service; by-and-bye the Psalms disappear altogether. At first the compositions of Evangelical men only are employed; soon the hymns of errorists and heretics are equally acceptable. It is the shame and the sin of the compilers of our modern hymnals and hymnaries that they provide for the sacrifice of praise to God the songs of errorists and even of idolaters—of men who are the enemies of human liberty, the bitter opponents of the Gospel of Christ. Edward Irving says, "Christians must be forms of the everlasting and common Spirit, not mannerists of mortal and individual men." What would Irving say now, when we are asked to become "mannerists" of all creeds in Christendom—of Arminians, Arians, Socinians, Ritualists, and Romanists?

In reply to the question, "Why is there no Psalter in the New Testament?" we have noted—

1. The uniqueness of the experiences depicted in the Psalms, given by men who represented the Lord Jesus Christ, and who were intended by God to prefigure Him in His mediatorial character. These delineations were transcripts out of the Divine idea in the mind of God concerning all the fulness of power and grace that was to be in Christ. These, so far as we can know, could not be, and did not need to be, repeated.

2. The fulness and sufficiency of the Psalms for the Ordinance of Praise. To the evidence already given, I may add that of Delitzsch, who says, "There is no essential New Testament truth not contained in the Psalms."

3. The Psalms are adapted to the position and circumstances of the Church in every age. They are fitted to be the hymn-book of the universal Church.

4. Christ not having given any Psalter in the New Testament, the only inference that can be drawn is that none is required. To assert that it is required and that it is to be provided by uninspired men is to impeach the faithfulness of Christ, the Head of Ordinances and the Lawgiver of the Church. A Psalter to be composed by uninspired men is barred out by the great Scriptural principle that what is not given in Divine Ordinances is withheld, what is not commanded is forbidden.

5. God teaches us by His providence and by the history of His Church. A man-made psalter invariably sets aside the Divine Ordinance of Psalm-singing. There are many other objections against the introduction of hymns into worship, but this of itself is fatal to their claims. Any kind of worship which sets aside a Scriptural Ordinance must be false worship.

The Psalms are given by God for the edification of His Church; the singing of them is His Ordinance, and He will bless it. Let their meaning be apprehended, their spiritual fulness exhibited, their relation to Christ pointed out, their infinite superiority to every other medium of praise vindicated, and the singing of Psalms will again become with God's children a delight and a passion, as it was in Reformation times, and in Reforming days in Scotland and in this land of ours.

"The words of God are words most pure;
They be like silver tried
In earthen furnace, seven times
That hath been purified."

THE FULNESS AND SUFFICIENCY OF THE PSALMS FOR THE DIVINELY-APPOINTED ORDINANCE OF PRAISE.

By REV. T. E. MOFFAT, Paterson, New Jersey, U.S.A.

Since the day when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, the whole creation of God has praised its Maker, and every created thing has magnified His glory. But of all the creatures of His animated creation, the crowning glory was reserved for man, with a living soul, created in the image of God, and, while Divinely inspired, and Divinely directed, capable of rendering devotedly his great Creator's praise. That this matchless pæan of praise was marred by the advent of sin, there can be no doubt; but yet, to that fallen and sinful condition we owe the still more glorious fact of redemption; and by this evidence of Divine love God gives to man a grander and more sublime reason to praise Him as Creator and Redeemer. For, this great plan of redemption provided for man, brought God and man together into terms of the closest intimacy possible between man and his holy Redeemer. We see the Creator and Ruler of the Universe planning for the redemption into infinite glory of His unruly subjects, of those defiant against His authority, and rebellious against His holy will. When this great design of God was made known to man, and man, because of his fallen human nature, had only dimly comprehended it, was it not peculiarly fitting that God should give him appropriate thoughts and words, that he might give to Him His due glory as his Redeemer, for the infinite provisions of this glorious redemption?

Under these circumstances, friends, we believe that God prepared for man, by those whom He had Divinely inspired, this Divinely-appointed manual of praise, which we enjoy to-day—the Book of Psalms. In that book of praises we see the material provided in advance of the exercise of praise, as one has truly said, "The Holy Ghost has been in the field for centuries as the rival of all hymn-writers, knowing what is suitable for insertion in God's Book, and what is pleasing to God for His praise in worship; and, certainly, he would be a rash man who would say that he knew better than the Holy Ghost what would please God, and be worthy of His glorious praise." We know that this is not the sentiment of the great mass of men to-day with regard to the praise of God. Is it not rather for that which ministers to the vanity of man's sinful heart, and the reign of deceitfulness within his own sin-

ful mind? Here the hymn-writer and the hymn-singer find their place, and denying the fulness and sufficiency of the Psalms, Divinely inspired and Divinely appointed though they be, they furnish us with every form of human composition, to give to us this variety, this fulness and sufficiency for which, to them at least, the inspiration of the Holy Ghost has seemed totally inadequate.

At this point we take issue with them all, and make the claim, and believe we can substantiate it, that in the Psalms there is a Divine fulness and sufficiency for the praise of our Almighty God, and that they are complete and adequate in themselves for the Divinely-appointed Ordinance of Praise. And, more than this, they are adapted in their range of subjects, their beauty of sentiment, their depth of meaning, their variety of expression, their intense spiritual devotion, to express every deep and varying emotion of the human heart, and to awaken every holy influence for the growth and progress heavenward of the spiritual life of man. Let us touch the chords of the Divine harp to-day, and listen to the notes responding.

1. Where shall we find a grander call to render the pæan of universal praise to the Lord of heaven and earth than in our 100th Psalm?

> "All people that on earth do dwell,
> Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
> Him serve with mirth, His praise forth tell,
> Come ye before Him and rejoice."

2. Or what words of human composition can raise within the mind of man a higher conception of the infinite omniscience and omnipresence of God than the words of our 104th Psalm? There the earth, with her rocks and rills, her hills and valleys, her firs and cedars, her birds and beasts; the sea, ever-restless, with its manifold wonders of the deep; the sun in his mid-day glory; and the moon in her reflected splendour —all unite in a harmony of adoration and praise to God for His wonders of creation and providence, until we are constrained to echo the words of the Psalmist: "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches."

3. You may search all literature and you will never find such another depth of heartfelt sorrow for sin, or such a wail of human penitence and contrition, under the chastening of God, or such a plea for pardon, or hope of acceptance with God, as we find in that penitential 51st Psalm—

"From my sins hide Thou Thy face,
Blot them out in Thy rich grace;
Free my heart, O God, from sin,
Spirit right renew within.
Cast me not away from Thee,
Nor Thy Spirit take from me."

4. What human vocabulary can adequately express the wonderful experiences of Divine mercy and grace, of redeeming love, of glorious salvation, to be found in the 103rd, 116th, and 130th Psalms? Well may the regenerate soul, appreciating in his own case the depth of God's infinite love and mercy, sing—

"Israel, hope thou in Jehovah,
Mercies great are found in Him;
He, abounding in redemption,
Israel will from sin redeem."

Or this—

"Far as east from west is distant
He hath put away our sin;
Like the pity of a father
Hath the Lord's compassion been."

5. Can human faith go deeper or rise higher in the trusting soul, in its unbounded confidence in the keeping power of God, than in the 91st Psalm, where the soul is represented as dwelling in the secret place of the Most High, and abiding under the shadow of the Almighty?

"The man who once has found abode
Within the secret place of God,
Shall with Almighty God abide
And in His shadow safely hide."

6. We touch the chords of the Divine harp but once again, and the heart that fails to vibrate responsive to the notes of the 23rd Psalm must be utterly destitute of the grace of God and oblivious to the fostering care of the Divine Shepherd of souls. Can you think of a time in any life when this eternal truth of God will not bring a message to the soul, and offer a safe foundation on which the heart of man may safely trust? Let it speak for itself. When the sinner lays the burden of his sins on Jesus and experiences the joy of his salvation, what can better his confidence than to sing—

"The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green: He leadeth me
The quiet waters by."

Or, when the weary traveller has almost completed the journey of life, and his eyes are closing on the scenes of earth, to open on the shining shore and the celestial home of the redeemed, how the eyes of the dying saint light up and his heart thrills to the well-remembered words—

"Yea, though I walk through death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear no ill:
For Thou art with me; and Thy rod
And staff me comfort still."

Beautiful, spiritual, devotional 23rd Psalm! A safe and secure foundation for the Christian convert, a never-failing source of spiritual strength for the Christian worker, a perennial fountain of comfort for the suffering and sorrowful of earth, and a downy pillow for the head of the dying saint of God. May our voices sing it forth to-day and always, in the deepest, sublimest words of faith and confidence in God ever expressed by mortal man!

"Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me:
And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be."

Amen, and Amen.

PRAISE—Psalm 89, 15-18. BENEDICTION.

THURSDAY, 7th AUGUST.

LUNCHEON, Afternoon, from 1-15 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN :—

REV. PROFESSOR DICK, M.A., D.D., Belfast, Ireland.

A Blessing was asked by Rev. N. M. Brown, D.D., LL.D., Limavady, Ireland.

Luncheon over, and Psalm 145, 15 and 16, having been sung, the Chairman said—If there be not a logical connection between a Psalm-singers' Conference and a luncheon, we may possibly find a connection in the association of ideas. We have been dealing in our Conference with that which is good and wholesome in a spiritual sense, and I think that perhaps the transition in thought would not be too great a strain for you now to what is good and wholesome in a material way, of which you have just partaken. The very fact that we are met in such a situation as that the question of taste in matters of food comes up, suggests to me the question of taste in other matters as well—say in the matter of spiritual food. He would be regarded as a very strange man who preferred utterly inferior food always to that which is superior. We read in one of the parables of the New Testament of a man who "would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat". But he was a prodigal. He had "wasted his substance with riotous living". And remember too—and this is the thing particularly to be remembered under the circumstances—that he would have eaten the husks from necessity and not from choice. Now, I think we are entitled to say that there are some in these days who, in spiritual things, would fain have the husks from choice, not from necessity. We have seen—and I think it has been proved in our Conference in the most conclusive and convincing way to every man who is capable of reasoning on the subject—that we have in

the Psalms wholesome spiritual food. I think it is the experience of all the Churches, even of Churches that have had other spiritual food (or what they call spiritual food), that a great deal of that which has been catered for them in hymn-books has not been anything but husks. Taking this position, I think that we are entitled to say that we are most properly dealing with wholesome food in connection with the transactions of our Psalm-singers' Conference, viz., the spiritual food that God has provided for us in His own Songs. It was shown yesterday by our Chairman from Glasgow (Mr. M'Neilage), in his own blunt and extremely effective and clever way, that it is not a spiritual taste that desires the husks; and it was shown pretty clearly, also, that the husks did not tend to develop healthy spiritual life or vitality. This is, I think, perfectly clear; and yet those who have a hankering after the husks, from choice, insist on our taking the husks also. They are not content to feed or regale themselves according to their own choice. We might say, Let them have the husks, if they will. But they are not content with that: they insist on our taking the husks, too. Well, we insist on not taking the husks, but on taking the wholesome food God has provided. It may be said, They do *not insist*. They will doubtless at once tell us this. In point of fact, in regard to the use of these husks—say in the Presbyterian Church of Ireland—the husk-hankerers have asked only for "liberty". That was the first demand, at all events; but as soon as they got hymns in, they took away the liberty of the men who do not want the hymns. And if there be any man in a "liberty" congregation, or any body of men in the congregation, to whom hymns are nauseous (and there are such in perhaps nearly all the congregations of the Irish Presbyterian Church)—if, I say, there be men to whom hymns are nauseous, who abhor any such disgusting substitute for wholesome food, then they must either have the husks of man's providing, or nothing. In other words, when uninspired hymns are sung, they must either violate God's law and their own consciences, or sit silent or else leave the place altogether. So that the so-called liberty is all on the one side, the liberty of every conscientious man being taken away by the "liberty" that is claimed by these innovators. On this ground I think we are entitled to say that the liberty ought to be according to the perfect law of liberty, and not an overbearing self-will, which destroys true liberty. We know the history of some congregations, and the treatment given to those who abhor hymns in the worship of God. We know that such men have either had to leave, or sit down under perpetual protest against this infringement of their religious liberty. In this case it is clear

that the innovators are disposed to give no liberty to those who are the faithful and conscientious adherents to a Divinely-given Psalmody.

Rev. Prof. Atchison, Albia, Iowa, U.S.A., said—I do not feel I am the right man in the right place, when it comes to making after-dinner speeches. I am conscious that I have no particular talent in that direction, and I hardly know what to say to you. But there is one thing I certainly can say—that I am enjoying a privilege which I had very little conception of a few months ago, and which I had no anticipation of enjoying. I have long entertained a wish that I might see the British Isles, and might make the acquaintance of persons whom I knew otherwise than by personal association; but I had little idea that ever such an opportunity would be afforded me. Our little body, however, saw fit to appoint me as its representative to this gathering in the old city of Belfast, of which I heard my grandfather talk when I was but a little child. He was once a resident in this country, and was many times in the city. I feel, therefore, that whilst far from my birthplace, I am at home; and that feeling is particularly strengthened by this thought, that I am amongst Psalm-singers—indeed that is just what makes me feel at home. There is a tender chord of sympathy existing, I think, between all Psalm-singing Churches. Whatever differences there may be on other subjects, this is a strong cord that binds them together; and, I think, that the time is coming when it will bind more Churches and more denominations than it does now. And whilst I tell you I am enjoying and appreciating the privilege that is at present mine, I am glad to tell you also that Columbus discovered America. When I was coming across the great ocean I felt that he must have been a most determined and persevering man, with the facilities which he had at his command, to undertake to seek out a new land—an undiscovered region; and I am glad he succeeded.

And now I wish—I am not a politician at all—to say that whilst I have suggested there is a tender chord of sympathy between the Psalm-singing Churches across the water and the Psalm-singing Churches here, I rejoice that there is such a cordial feeling between the two great Governments of the United States and Great Britain. I know there is a very great friendship in our Government for the Government of Great Britain; and there is a feeling that the two great countries have a great mission. We are comparatively young, but we are developing; and, I think, Providence has a great work to be accomplished by the United States.

Rev. T. Matthew, Kilwinning, Scotland, referred to the

hospitality extended to the delegates, the entertainment provided for them, and the cordial reception given; and also made reference to the mental food provided in the shape of papers on so many aspects of the Psalmody question. He said he was reminded of a story of some boys who were discussing what they would like to be. One said a baker, another a plumber, but a third, whose father had frequent visitors who were well treated by him, said he would like to be a stranger. He (Mr. Matthew) thought he would like to be a stranger in Ireland that he might receive such a hearty welcome as had been given the delegates.

He thought, however, some thanks were due him for providing such an excellent Chairman for yesterday's afternoon meeting. He (Mr. Matthew) was to have taken the chair, but coming across Mr. M'Neilage, he persuaded him to do so. Dumas, the noted novelist, had a great friend, who once asked him what could he do to show his regard. Dumas, who was busy working, said to this friend, who was standing between him and the window, "You can get out of my light." He (Mr. Matthew) had got out of their light yesterday in favour of Mr. M'Neilage, whose address they had much enjoyed.

Mr. A. Milliken, Ballymena, Ireland, said his opinions on the Psalm-singing question were formed very early in his life. He hoped that no uncertain sound would go forth from that Conference, and that its influence would be felt not only throughout the Irish and American Churches, but all over the world, and that men would know they were determined to abide by the will of God in the matter of His worship.

Mr. Jas. Harper, J.P., Londonderry, Ireland, said—I count it a great honour to say anything in connection with this Conference, which so far has been a marked success. We had some anxiety as to it, but it has been a great success—far greater than ever was anticipated by the promoters or those who took an active interest in it from the beginning. It gives us the greatest possible pleasure to meet with sympathetic friends from all parts of the world; and we are glad to see so many men in loving sympathy with us from the United States. To what extent this Conference may arrest the progress of the hymn-singing movement one cannot foretell, but certainly it has given an opportunity of discussing the whole subject in a way that had never been offered before, since the commencement of the controversy.

PRAISE—Psalm 117. BENEDICTION.

THURSDAY, 7th AUGUST.

AFTERNOON MEETING, from 3 to 5 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN :—

MR. RODERICK CAMPBELL, Glasgow, Scotland.

PRAISE—Psalm 98, 1-4.

Rev. Isaac Vance, Gransha, Belfast, Ireland, led in prayer.

Chairman's Address :—

I desire to thank you for the very kind and cordial reception the delegates have received at your hands. We are very pleased indeed to be among you, and to see such a good and excellent and stimulating Conference as we have had in regard to the inspired Psalms of David. We are pleased indeed, and we feel quite at home among so many Psalm-singers. You heard yesterday from the Rev. Mr. Mackenzie, Inverness, Scotland, that he had been a Psalm-singer all his life. I can say the very same thing, that I have been singing Psalms all my life. There never was a hymn sung in the congregation with which I have been connected; and, dear friends, we sing the Psalms not only in the English but in the Gaelic tongue. When I was considering how this craze for hymn-singing began, I was led to think it originated largely in our Sabbath-schools, under the pretence that the children, at their tender age, could not understand the Psalms of David. This has been a great mistake, I think. In our Presbyterian Churches, our Sessions—who, I understand, have the superintendence of the Sabbath-schools—should not allow the thin end of the wedge to enter in. They should not permit the children to be taught uninspired hymns instead of the inspired Psalms. Error has come into the Presbyterian Churches by the introduction of hymns into the Sabbath-school; and when the children grow up into men and women the result is that they

are ignorant of the Psalms of David. They do not understand them: hence the craze for human uninspired hymns.

We hope that this Conference is only the beginning of such conferences, not only in Ireland and America, but in Scotland, too. It rejoices one's heart to find so many who are loyal to the King of kings, and who show by their presence here that they are determined to stand up for the inspired Psalter. God charged Israel of old with two great evils. "They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters," He said, "and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." I think, dear friends, these words may be applied to those who sing hymns and forsake the Psalms, in which there is hidden deep down a mine of spiritual treasure. I think that is not too strong language to apply to those who forsake the Divinely-appointed Psalter and use human hymns instead.

God's Word, let us never forget, dear brethren, is the good seed of the kingdom. And what better could be taught to children in Sabbath-schools and Bible-classes than the pure, unadulterated Word of God? Like bread cast upon the waters, it will be found after many days.

God says regarding His Word—and it is a very significant fact—"It shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Those who stand by the Songs of David have this promise when using the Divinely-given Psalms, and they can look to God for the fulfilment of His promise in connection with the singing of His own appointed Songs in His worship.

What is needed is an outpouring of the Spirit of God in connection with the Ordinances of His house, to bring men to a sense of their need of a Saviour, and to bring them back to God and to the simplicity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We need a Pentecostal blessing from God. Let us pray and plead for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; for if we being evil know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more shall our Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.

THE FULNESS AND SUFFICIENCY OF THE PSALMS.

By MR. SAMUEL E. A. ACHESON, Belfast, Ireland.

During the past two days we have heard much about the Service of Praise and the Matter of Praise; but, perhaps, someone asks the question, Is this Book of Psalms fully fitted for the purpose? Is it a complete and perfect Manual of Praise? We shall strive to answer this question, though to us it almost seems blasphemous, as it appears to cast doubt on the wisdom of God, that in giving us this Book, He limited the number of Songs of Praise for His Church to the one hundred and fifty Psalms. But that is the exact position held by hymn-singers; for by their actions, if not by their words, they imply that it is neither complete nor perfect. We should think that men would consider well their ways, where a false step may mean disaster; but no, they must have a little deviation here and a little there, until at last God's appointed way is forsaken and other ways taken; so that a return to the "old paths" and "the good way" seems impossible.

On the other hand we who sing the Psalms alone in the Ordinance of Praise not only consider them by far the best, but we also believe the Book to be a perfect one, fully fitted in every way for the purpose for which it was designed.

Changes, many and great, have passed over the Church since the Psalms were written: ceremonial worship has ceased, sacrifice and offering have become things of the past, and types have been explained and prophecy fulfilled by the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. But, though these changes have come in the Church, God, the great object of worship, remains unchanged and unchangeable, as we sing in the 102nd Psalm, 27th verse—

"But from all changes Thou art free;
Thy endless years do last for aye."

So that the words of adoration used by saints of old are found fully fitted for God's people throughout all the ages.

Do we wish to praise God for what He is in Himself—His Oneness, His eternity, the infinity of His being and perfections? then here is material rich and abundant lying ready for our use. We sing of His greatness (Psalm 86, 10)—

"Because Thou art exceeding great,
And works by Thee are done
Which are to be admir'd; and Thou
Art God Thyself alone."

Or (Psalm 106, 2)—

"God's mighty works who can express?
Or shew forth all His praise?"

And again and again He is referred to as "the mighty God" or "the Lord Almighty".

His omniscience and His omnipresence are told in the 139th Psalm. Our sitting down, our rising up, our footsteps, our words, yea, our very thoughts—all come within His ken; while our inability to find a place where He is not is exemplified in many ways, from which the Psalmist finds comfort, and, therefore, he sings (verse 17)—

"How precious also are Thy thoughts,
O gracious God, to me!
And in their sum how passing great
And numberless they be!"

Do we wish to sing of His justice, His power, His wisdom, or His glory? We take (Psalm 36, 5 and 6)—

"Thy mercy, Lord, is in the heav'ns;
Thy truth doth reach the clouds:
Thy justice is like mountains great;
Thy judgments deep as floods."

Or (Psalm 145, 17)—

"The Lord is just in His ways all,
And holy in His works each one."

Or (Psalm 147, 5)—

"Great is our Lord, and of great pow'r;
His wisdom search can none."

Or (Psalm 104, 24)—

"How manifold, Lord, are Thy works!
In wisdom wonderful
Thou every one of them hast made."

Or (Psalm 113, 3 and 4)—

"From rising sun to where it sets,
God's name is to be prais'd.
Above all nations God is high,
'Bove heav'ns His glory rais'd."

Do we desire to express His faithfulness, His mercy, His goodness, His love? Here we have material from His own hand (Psalm 92, 2)—

"Thy loving-kindness to shew forth
When shines the morning light;
And to declare Thy faithfulness
With pleasure ev'ry night."

Or (Psalm 40, 10 and 11)—

"Thy kindness, which most loving is,
Concealed have not I,
Nor from the congregation great
Have hid Thy verity.
Thy tender mercies, Lord, from me
O do Thou not restrain;
Thy loving-kindness, and Thy truth,
Let them me still maintain."

Or (Psalm 36, 10)—

"Thy loving-kindness unto them
Continue that Thee know;
And still on men upright in heart
Thy righteousness bestow."

Indeed, whole psalms and groups of psalms are taken up with these topics. See the 107th, with the ever-recurring words, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"

Do we think of God as the Creator and Preserver of the universe? Then we use the 8th Psalm—

"When I look up unto the heav'ns,
Which Thine own fingers fram'd,
Unto the moon, and to the stars,
Which were by Thee ordain'd."

Or the 19th Psalm—

"The heav'ns God's glory do declare,
The skies His hand-works preach."

Or the 136th, the 33rd, the 24th, or many others.

So we see that, if we wish to praise God for what He is in Himself, we have a plentiful supply of suitable material in the Psalms.

But when we turn from the contemplation of the Divine excellencies to look at man, and when we direct our thoughts to the kingdom of grace, what do we find? First of all, we see our state by nature set forth in all its misery, our unworthiness, our inability to do good, the uselessness of trying to hide our guilt from God—all are shown; and the overwhelming burden of sin at last finds utterance in words of confession (Psalm 32, 5)—

"I thereupon have unto Thee
My sin acknowledged,
And likewise mine iniquity
I have not covered:
I will confess unto the Lord
My trespasses, said I;
And of my sin Thou freely didst
Forgive th' iniquity."

It is just here, where human hymn-books are so weak, that the Psalms are fullest. See the confession of sin in the 19th, the 30th, and the 130th Psalms, or that heart-broken cry for forgiveness in the 51st Psalm—

"'Gainst Thee, Thee only, have I sinn'd."

"Behold, I in iniquity
Was form'd the womb within."

"All mine iniquities blot out,
Thy face hide from my sin."

"Cast me not from Thy sight, nor take
Thy holy Sp'rit away.
Restore me Thy salvation's joy;
With Thy free Sp'rit me stay."

Having obtained this forgiveness, we are filled with the joy of salvation, and we sing (Psalm 40, 3)—

"He put a new song in my mouth,
Our God to magnify."

Or (Psalm 116, 7)—

"O thou my soul, do thou return
Unto thy quiet rest;
For largely, lo, the Lord to thee
His bounty hath exprest.
For my distressed soul from death
Deliver'd was by Thee:
Thou didst my mourning eyes from tears,
My feet from falling, free."

Do we wish to know the nature of God's law? Read the 19th, or the 119th Psalm—"that holy alphabet for Zion's scholars," as an old divine puts it—that Psalm of which the late John Ruskin, near the close of a long life, said, "It is strange that of all the pieces of the Bible which my mother taught me, that which cost me most to learn, and which was to my child's mind most repulsive, the 119th Psalm, has now become, of all, the most precious to me in its overflowing and glorious passion of love for the law of God."

When our souls are filled with gratitude to God for many mercies, our thankfulness finds its deepest expression in the Psalms. Do we wish to pray? The Book is full of prayers. Do we meet with God's people in His house? We sing (Psalm 122, 1)—

"I joy'd when to the house of God,
Go up, they said to me."

Or (Psalm 5, 7)—

"But I into Thy house will come
In Thine abundant grace;
And I will worship in Thy fear
Toward Thy holy place."

Again, we need God's continual presence with us through life, and so we sing (Psalm 16, 8)—

"Before me still the Lord I set;
Sith it is so that He
Doth ever stand at my right hand,
I shall not moved be."

We need help in adversity, in sickness, and at death—all is here. Those who visit the sick tell us that they find the Bible lying open at the Psalms more frequently than at any

other portion of God's Word. And no wonder, for here there is comfort for every sorrow, strength for every weakness, and help for every difficulty; while the subjects of life and death, resurrection and judgment, and eternal blessedness, are so treated of by the Divine Author of this book as to give joy and comfort to the true believer.

We are greatly tempted to speak of the references to the Redeemer in the Psalms; but as this subject has already received special treatment, we must refrain.

Hymn-singers are extremely fond of hymns for special occasions, but we have suitable material for the purpose in our Manual of Praise. It treats of the Sabbath Day, of summer, of harvest, of winter, of missions, of revivals, and of communion seasons. It treats also of wars and victory and peace (Psalm 46, 9 and 11)—

"Unto the ends of all the earth
Wars into peace He turns;
The bow He breaks, the spear He cuts,
In fire the chariot burns."

"Our God, Who is the Lord of Hosts,
Is still upon our side;
The God of Jacob our refuge
For ever will abide."

We were present when a telegram was read from the pulpit of a city Church announcing the end of the late war in South Africa and the signing of the articles of peace, and we shall never forget the heartfelt Song of Praise which was offered to the God of battles, in the 117th Psalm, the 2nd version in the Psalter of the Irish Presbyterian Church—

"From all that dwell below the skies,
O let Jehovah's praise arise!
And let His glorious name be sung
In every land, by every tongue!
Great are the mercies of the Lord,
And truth eternal is His Word;
Ye nations, sound from shore to shore
Jehovah's praise for evermore!"

But we have given enough examples to show the adaptability of the Divine Hymn-book to all the needs of God's people. We may, then, well ask, Wherein is it lacking? and the answer is, In nothing; for it contains the richest store

of Christian experience, of deep-seated spiritual desires and longings after holiness, thanksgiving, and prayer; interest in the welfare of our brethren, of the Church, of missions, and of the world; strong faith, warring often with unbelief; resignation and trust in God—all are found in this inexhaustible treasure-house, where we have only to open the door to find our every want fully provided for. Indeed, we might say that every doctrine, every manifestation of God's love and care, and every Christian experience are treated of in the Book of Psalms. It has been well called, "an Epitome of God's Word."

Great writers seem almost to have vied with one another in extolling the worth of the Psalms, as Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustine in the early Church, and Luther, Calvin, and Melancthon among the Reformers. Calvin says, "I may truly call this Book an anatomy of all parts of the soul, for no one can feel a movement of the spirit which is not reflected in this mirror. All the sorrows, troubles, fears, doubts, hopes, pains, perplexities, stormy outbreaks by which the hearts of men are tossed, have been here depicted by the Holy Spirit to the very life." Coming down to later times we have Milton, Hooker, Horne, Tholuck, Carlyle, Scott, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and many more—all giving expression to their sense of the wonderful completeness of the Book of Psalms. "They [the Psalms] present religion to us", says Bishop Horne, "in the most engaging dress; communicating truths which philosophy could never investigate, in a style which poetry can never equal; while history is made the vehicle of prophecy, and creation lends all its charms to paint the glories of redemption."

The Psalms not fitted for worship in the Christian Church! Why, they are profoundly perfect; deep as the deep things of God; complete as He only can count completeness. They have served the purpose of praise for ages. The Jewish Church, the Apostolic Church, and the Reformation Church used nothing else. They have been sung by all classes and conditions of men, from the king on the throne to the prisoner in the darksome dungeon. They have been sung by the persecuted everywhere—at the stake, on the scaffold, in dens and caves of the earth, on broad hillsides and lonely moors, on great continents and lonely islands of the sea. Not fitted! Not perfect! Not full enough for modern Christians! Yes, in spite of the ever-increasing number of hymn-books—each new one warranted the best—this is the book and these the songs to which God's people will ever turn for help and comfort and guidance throughout their lives. We learned them at our mother's knee; we use them in our manhood;

they will still be fresh in our old age; and when at last we near the other land, we'll sing—

"Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear none ill:
For Thou art with me; and Thy rod
And staff me comfort still."

"Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me:
And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be."

CHRIST IN THE PSALMS.*

By REV. PROFESSOR MORTON, Perth, Scotland.

Did the Psalms not contain an adequate portraiture of Christ, they could not possibly be a suitable, not to speak of a sufficient, Manual of Praise for the Christian Church. Christ is the centre of the Christian life. He is the object, by the believing contemplation and appropriation of which those sentiments and feelings of different kinds are excited which find expression in Christian praise. If, then, this object is not presented to us in the Book of Psalms, and presented to us in a full and adequate manner, we are more than warranted in seeking other spiritual songs that perform this necessary function. We would in that case be justified in laying aside the Book of Psalms altogether, and seeking another vehicle of devotion. But they who object to the Psalms on the ground that the presentation of Christ the Saviour in them is defective, surely fail in a discernment of their real character. There are some things about the use of the Psalms in the Church that should lead such persons more carefully to examine the position which they have taken up. It is a noteworthy fact that the life of the early Christian Church seemed to be steeped in the Psalms. The references to them in the early chapters of the Acts of the Apostles are very numerous. Of the two hundred and forty-three quotations from the Old Testament found in the pages of the New, no fewer than one

* Read on Thursday forenoon.

hundred and sixteen—nearly the half—are from the single Book of Psalms. A similar proportion, we are told, holds with most of the early fathers. Bishop Alexander, in his "Witness of the Psalms", tells us, as the result of a careful examination, that reference is made to the Book of Psalms, either by quotation or otherwise, in no fewer than two hundred and eighty-six passages of the New Testament. It does seem strange that so extensive a use should have been made by the early Christians of these spiritual lyrics, if they are characterized by the absence of distinctively Christian elements. There is surely a presumption here that Christ was found in the Psalms. Then in the Old Testament Church the use of this Psalter had an intimate connection with the cherished hope of the Messiah, which Jesus claimed to be. This hope was fed and sustained by the worship in which these Psalms, set to appropriate music, played an important part. Indeed, when the Hebrew Scriptures, with the Psalter in the heart of them, were brought by means of the Septuagint version within the knowledge of Gentile nations, there sprung up among them the hope of a world-wide Redeemer who was to come from among the Jews. Some think that this was a hope handed down from early times, and excited and strengthened by the iron hand of Rome pressing heavily upon them. But Mr. Gladstone has expressed the opinion that its fountain-head was found in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, and specially in the Messianic Psalms, which were, of all the available evidence, the part most in the eye and mind of the people. Now, if the Psalms exerted this influence upon the life of Israel and upon the life of Gentile nations, they must be charged with this Messianic hope—must have vivid, captivating pictures of the promised Messiah and His work. They could not otherwise have produced this effect.

An examination of the Book of Psalms makes plain that in it, in the section of the sacred Jewish writings in which it occupies the first place, as in the other two sections, the Torah of Moses and the prophetical writings, there are pictures of the Messiah given beforehand, and given by Divine inspiration. The risen Saviour unveiled to the disciples these pictures found in Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms (Luke 24, 44). How these pictures were produced is an interesting question on which criticism has expended much labour, not without good results. The foot of the ladder, if we may use the simile, rests on earth, in the experience of God's people individually or collectively, but the top of it penetrates to a higher than earthly sphere. The earthly king is made to adumbrate One Whose manner is not

that of a mere man. The earthly sufferer becomes transfigured into a Sufferer Who stands on a higher than earthly level, and whose sufferings possess a saving virtue and efficacy which could not legitimately be ascribed to the sufferings of a mere man. The experience of God's people gathers itself into the experiences of One Who, while akin to them, stands on a higher level than they do. There thus emerges the figure of a Redeemer Who in His person, like Jacob's ladder, touches heaven and earth, Who by His sufferings unto death accomplished the redemption of His people, and Who establishes a kingdom destined to be world-wide. It may be, as the critics never weary of telling us, that the vision of those through whose minds and pens the pictures have come to us was bounded by the earthly sphere, or only grasped some vague, undefined ideal of an uncertain future. If this were so, and it may have been the case with some of them, then their thoughts and words had a meaning and fulness which they themselves did not grasp. Peter has told us that the prophets of the Old Covenant searched out what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. The Spirit that wrought in and through them had a design, not fully realized under the Old Covenant, but to be fully realized under the New. He was furnishing pictures in outline of Christ that would be filled in by His actual advent and work, and so pictures that would serve to excite pious feeling to the end of time.

As these pictures are the fruit of actual experience—of actual experience, if you will, idealized—they admit us to a view of the Christ, not from without, but from within. They open a window into the Messianic consciousness of Jesus in the fulfilment of that high vocation which brought Him from heaven to earth. The result is that they furnished to Jesus Himself a means of helpful expression in all His experiences. In the great crises of His life you find Him using the Psalms. At the beginning of His earthly ministry, in resisting the assaults of Satan in the wilderness, His soul rested on one of the Psalms, in which he was assured of angelic guardianship. In the tragic close of that earthly ministry on the Cross, in yielding His life up to the Eternal Father in atonement for human sin, the Psalms brought to Him the most helpful vehicle for the expression of His feelings. The 22nd and 31st Psalms were both laid under contribution to serve this sacred purpose. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" "It is finished", and "Into Thine hands I commend My spirit" —all are words taken from these Psalms. Now Jesus, while the Redeemer, is also the leader and perfecter of our Christian

faith. In Him we have a perfect pattern, not only of the external manner of life His disciples should follow, but of the inner manner of life that should be pursued—of the feelings, motives, and aims that should be cherished. His worship is the pattern after which ours must be modelled, if it is to approximate the ideal of Christian worship. Well, if the Psalms were found suitable by Christ in His expression of His emotions Godward, their suitability for His followers can hardly be called in question. As having been used by Him, they furnish the best and safest guide to those thoughts, feelings, desires, emotions of different kinds, that must lie behind all acceptable praise and worship, and the most reliable test of genuine religious feeling. In the very fact that they have been hallowed by the Master's constant use, what a sanction has been put upon their use to the end of time, and what a condemnation is passed upon those who deny their suitability as a vehicle of Christian praise! But while the Messianic consciousness expressed in the Psalms may be taken as a standard and pattern of the truly religious consciousness, it rises at many points to a lofty height above it—to a loftier than human height. In harmony with this is the objective presentation of the Messiah found in other Psalms. The figure that rises before us, while manlike, is also Godlike. We have in the Psalms a conception of Christ's person that is in the most perfect consistency with fully developed Christian belief. It would be foolish to assert that there was in the minds of the human authors of the Psalms any clear idea of the Trinity, or of the union of the Divine and human natures in the person of the promised Messiah. That knowledge would then have been an anachronism. It was the actual manifestation of Christ in the flesh that brought the clear discovery of the distinction of Persons in the Godhead, and of the actual union of the Divine and human natures. Not until the meaning of that manifestation had been grasped by the thought of the Christian Church could definite doctrine on these points be formulated. Still, there were anticipations and foreshadowings of them in the revelation of the Old Covenant, and in the response to it found in the Psalms. These anticipations and foreshadowings, with the light of the manifestation of God in Christ thrown back upon them, become almost expositions of these high doctrines, and helpful channels for expressing the feelings connected with them. There are many references to God in the Psalms that can only find a satisfactory explanation in a distinction of Persons existing in the Godhead, such as, "Jehovah said unto My Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." The Divine character of the Messiah is clearly

stated. The epiphanies of which such glowing descriptions are given find their fulfilment in Him. The name God is applied to Him. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." It may be said, without fear of contradiction, that the conception of God and of God's anointed One found in the Book of Psalms will stand comparison with that found anywhere else. In this we touch the essence of its enduring vitality and power; for the greatness of any book or any movement may be measured by the conception of God lying behind it.

In the conception of the Messiah found in the Psalms, the element of suffering is prominent. When the Cross was mentioned by the disciples on the way to Emmaus as a stumbling-block in the way of their belief in the Messiahship of Jesus, Jesus said to them, "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory," and then, "He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." He manifestly pointed out to them that the Cross, with its shame, suffering, death, and Redemption, had a prominent place in the prophetic delineations of the Messiah. In the Messianic Psalms, such as the 22nd, 69th, and 110th, it is conspicuous. We have a marvellous delineation, beforehand, of what really took place at Calvary. The Cross stands here as an instrument of salvation. The sufferings of the Messiah are presented as vicarious and redemptive. While in the writings of the prophets, as in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, these vicarious sufferings of the Messiah may be presented on their outward side, in many of the Messianic Psalms they are more exhibited on their inward side, in His thoroughly identifying Himself with His people and bearing their burdens. The spiritual element in the atonement for sin has justice done to it in the Psalms. There is, too, ample expression to all the devotional feelings that ought to encircle the Cross of Christ—deep penitence, grateful, adoring praise to God and Jesus, clinging faith and exultation, self-consecration and hope. The Rev. M. Kaufmann, in discussing "The Psalms in Literature", expresses himself in this way: "At all times they have been fully appreciated on account of their intrinsic value in expressing, in the best manner possible, the experience of the spiritually-minded in trials and triumphs of faith. The Psalms contain all the wealth and variety of religious emotion and the whole range of religious experience. Thus they still continue a complete treasury of devotion and a model of sacred poetry. Merely regarded as a unique example of elevated Oriental poetry, they still establish their claim as a 'devotional classic' for all ages" (*Sunday at Home* for August, 1902). Then in His sufferings and in the redemption secured by them, a solid foundation is laid for His reign over

men, of which many inspiring pictures are given to us in the Psalms. It is a kingdom given to Him by the Eternal Father; and all opposition to it will be overcome. The sceptre that He holds in His pierced hand is one of righteousness and love, and touches the hearts and consciences of men, making them a willing people, and bringing to them the richest blessings. It is a sceptre, the power of which shall yet be felt and owned in every human heart. "His name shall endure for ever."

CHRIST IN THE PSALMS—HIS SUFFERINGS.*

By REV. W. W. BARR, D.D., Philadelphia, Pa., U.S.A.

It has been objected to the Psalms of the Bible as the exclusive matter of God's praise, that Christ is not in them—at least that He is not set forth in them in His person, offices, and work, as He is in the hymns of human composition in general use in the Churches in these New Testament times. It is not difficult to show that the objection arises out of prejudice, or, at best, arises out of a lack of knowledge of what the Psalms do contain. It is astonishing that any one could read the 2nd Psalm, the 16th, the 18th, the 22nd, the 24th, the 40th, the 45th, the 69th, the 72nd, the 96th, the 98th, the 110th, and others like them, and say that Christ in His incarnation, His life, His person, His sufferings, His death, His resurrection, His ascension, His offices and work, the triumphs of His kingdom, His coming again, and His judging the world, is not in the Psalms. Certain it is that He Himself sang the Psalms, and found Himself in them. He quoted from them more frequently than from any other book in the Bible. They seem to have been His hand-book in His daily life. Expounding the things in the Scriptures concerning Himself, He showed that He was in Moses, in the Prophets, and *in the Psalms*. Certain it is, too, that Paul and other Apostles had no difficulty in finding Christ in the Psalms. Bishop Ryle has said that "Christ is undoubtedly to be found in every part of the Law and the Prophets; but nowhere else is He so much to be found as in the Book of Psalms".

The Limitation of our Subject.—But our subject, as assigned, limits us in this discussion to the *sufferings* of Christ as por-

* Read by Rev. James Parker, Ph.D., Jersey City, U.S.A.

trayed in the Psalms. Here we have no difficulty in finding Him. In the 2nd Psalm, the 22nd (which has been characterized as "that Psalm of Sobs"), the 69th, and others, we have the Saviour's sufferings set forth in the most minute and specific terms—more minute and specific, indeed, in some particulars than in the Gospels themselves. Some of the declarations in these Psalms are minute prophetic specifications of facts that were to occur, and that did occur precisely as foretold. Other revelations are made in types. In some of the Psalms—as the 16th, the 40th, parts of which are quoted in the New Testament and applied specifically to Christ and His humiliation and sufferings—there seem to be some things that are applicable only to David, or the author of the Psalm. The ready and proper explanation is, that in any case, Christ was viewed as the sufferer, either in Himself directly, or in David, who was mystically united to Him as a part of His body, the Church. Paul, in his Epistle to the Colossians (1, 24), speaks of filling up, by the afflictions which he was enduring, "that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church." By this he seems clearly to have meant that in the sufferings of Christ's people now, Christ Himself is suffering in His union with them; and that, in this sense, Christ will continue to suffer until these His sufferings shall have been completed in the sufferings of His body, the Church, the fulness of which suffering has not yet been finished. If Christ is properly said to suffer thus in His Church since He died on the cross, why may He not have been suffering as truly and really in His body, the Church, before His death actually occurred?

In view of this, we may not be specially concerned to determine exactly who speaks in this Psalm or that. In any case, Christ was portrayed as suffering in His own person or in His mystical body. The suffering believer, or the suffering Church, was then filling up that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ, as the suffering Church is now doing the same. I do not know of anything that gives us a more striking conception of the unity of Christ and His Church than this; and viewing the matter in this light, we may hear, in the groaning voice of many a Psalm in which David or other Psalmists appear to speak, the sad voice of the Saviour Himself suffering in His body, the Church. Many a Psalm, thus viewed, portrays for us the suffering Saviour, in which we have been accustomed to see only the suffering Psalmist or the suffering people of God.

Some Specific Revelations in the Psalms.—It is not our intention, in what remains to be said in this paper, to dwell

on the sufferings of Christ in general, as delineated in the Psalms. The subject has been so well and so fully discussed by others, that there does not seem to be anything that can be said that would be new or specially interesting. Besides, we are persuaded that no words of man in regard to the sufferings of Christ, as depicted in the Psalms, can be as effective as the words of the Psalms themselves. To be convinced of this, sit down and read alone, for instance, the 22nd Psalm, and think of Christ as He utters the cry on the cross with which the Psalm opens: and listen to, and take into your heart, His words throughout the Psalm, until you hear Him say, as He does in the original, at the close, "It is finished." One hesitates to enter a holy of holies like this with any words of his own. Hence, what we have to say farther in relation to the sufferings of Christ, as we see them in the Psalms, will be in the way of directing attention to a few things in these in which we have revelations which are not, at least distinctly, given in the New Testament.

As one instance, I might mention the piercing of the Saviour's feet in the crucifixion. This fact is not mentioned in the Gospel narratives. It might be implied in crucifixion, but in that the feet were not always pierced. Sometimes they were fastened to the upright beam of the cross by cords. Christ's hands were pierced with nails, and, after His death, His body by the spear of a soldier. No mention is made of His pierced feet in any of the Gospel narratives. After His resurrection, He showed His pierced hands and side to His disciples, and to the unbelieving Thomas, but there is no reference to His pierced feet. So far as the New Testament goes they may, or they may not, have been pierced in the crucifixion. For the certain, definite revelation in regard to this, we have to turn to the 22nd Psalm. There in the 16th verse we have the specific declaration, "They pierced . . . . My feet." For the certain knowledge of this we are indebted to the Psalm. This knowledge enhances the horror with which we contemplate the bodily sufferings of our Lord.

The Saviour's Broken Heart.—That Jesus died suddenly on the cross the record in the Gospels makes plain. He was on the cross only about six hours. Usually the time in which death occurred by crucifixion was much longer than this, extending from one to two or three days. That the body of Jesus and the bodies of those crucified with Him might not remain on the crosses beyond the day of the crucifixion, means were resorted to for hastening the deaths. Roman soldiers were sent to break the legs of the crucified. They broke the

legs of the two thieves, and were about to do the same with Jesus—but when they came to Him they found that He was already dead. When Joseph of Arimathæa asked Pilate for the body of Jesus, he "marvelled if He were already dead", and being assured that this was the case, he granted the request.

From all this it is evident that Jesus died before the time on the cross. The quickness of the death was marvellous. It was an exception among the crucified.

How is this to be accounted for? One explanation is, that the Divine compassion pitifully shortened the Saviour's sufferings. This hardly comports with the declaration from His own lips that the Father had forsaken Him, and in other respects it is not satisfactory. Another explanation is that the state of nervous exhaustion was followed by a sudden collapse, as is frequently the case in violent diseases. But this does not seem to be consistent with the fact that, in the act of dying Jesus "cried with a loud voice". Somewhat similarly it has been said that the sudden death was owing to "mortal fainting, or mere fatal arresting of the action of the heart by syncope". But the "loud cry" and subsequent exclamations would clearly be inconsistent with fatal fainting or syncope.

Again, the sudden death has been attributed to the wound in the region of the heart inflicted by the Roman soldier's spear. But clearly this is a mistake, for the record makes it plain that the spear-thrust was not made until some time after death had occurred.

None of these explanations being reasonably satisfactory, we must seek for another, if such can be found. We believe that it is given us in two of the Psalms. In the 22nd Psalm and 14th verse, Jesus is presented to us as saying, when He was on the cross, "My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels;" and in the 69th Psalm and the 20th verse He is recorded as saying, when in the same condition, that is, on the cross, "Reproach hath broken My heart." It is readily admitted that these words in these Psalms may be taken figuratively. We are all familiar with the expression, "he died of a broken heart," when we know that no literal breaking of the heart is meant, but that the meaning is, he died of deep, poignant grief. So when the Saviour said, "Reproach hath broken My heart," we may fairly understand Him as saying, I am in intense mental grief and suffering. But when we reflect that Jesus said, "Reproach hath broken My heart" in the same connection in which He said, "In My thirst they gave me vinegar to drink," and that He said, "My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My

bowels," in the same connection in which He said, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" "All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him," "They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture," the question at once arises, If these declarations are to be taken literally, and no one doubts that they are, why should we not take literally the declaration, "Reproach hath broken My heart"?

Are we in doubt whether the words, "Reproach hath broken My heart," are to be taken literally or figuratively? Let us turn to the New Testament and read the record that is given us by the Apostle (John 19, 34), "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His [Jesus'] side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." Here is exactly what takes place when blood has been poured out for a time. It separates into its constituent parts blood-clot and water. This is precisely what has been known to have taken place when the heart has been literally burst or broken. Well authenticated cases have been observed. In instances of extremely violent emotion either there has been bloody sweat exuding from the body, or there has been sudden death by the rupture of the heart, this usually attended with a loud outcry.

The blood in the heart thus broken empties into the pericardium, and after a time separates into its constituent parts, blood and water. When the side of Jesus was pierced by the Roman soldier's lance, and the heart sac was opened, there came from the opening, as the Apostle John saw it, "blood and water." The conclusion seems inevitably to be that Jesus died literally of a broken heart. Surely if any heart was ever ruptured by mental agony, we might say *a priori*, it would be the heart of Him Who, in being made a curse for us, endured, as no other has done, the maledictions of men, and, in penal displeasure, the hidings of His Father's face. This interesting and important revelation that Jesus died literally of a broken heart we have from the Psalms alone. The remarkable incidental confirmation of it we have from the narrative given by the Apostle John.

It should be remarked in this connection that this view of the physical cause of Christ's death gives emphasis to the actual shedding of His blood for the redemption of sinners. The Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, attach special importance to the actual shedding of blood. It is expressly said that "without shedding of blood is no remission", and that "the blood of Jesus Christ His [God's] Son cleanses us from all sin".

But according to the usual view of the crucifixion, little

blood was shed. Little, if any, would flow from the piercing of the hands and feet with the nails. But as Dr. Simpson, of Edinburgh, Scotland, has remarked, "This shedding of blood was assuredly done in the fullest possible sense under the view that the immediate cause of His dissolution was rupture of the heart, and the consequent fatal escape of the heart and life blood from the central cistern of the circulation."

And so Christ died for us, as the Psalm tells us, literally of a broken heart. As to the impression which this mode of death should make upon us, Dr. Simpson has remarked, "It has always seemed to my medical mind, at least, that this view of the mode in which death was produced in the human body of Christ intensifies all our thoughts and ideas regarding the immensity of the astounding sacrifice which He made for our sinful race on the cross. Nothing can possibly be more striking and startling than the appalling and terrible passiveness with which God, as man, submitted for our sakes, His incarnate body to all the horrors and tortures of the crucifixion. But our wonderment at the stupendous sacrifice only increases when we reflect that, while thus enduring for our sins the most cruel and agonizing form of corporeal death, He was ultimately 'slain' not by the effects of the anguish of His corporeal frame, but by the effects of the mightier anguish of His mind; the fleshy walls of His heart, like the veil, as it were, in the temple of His human body, becoming rent and riven, as for us He poured out His soul unto death; the 'travail of His soul', in that awful hour, thus standing out as unspeakably bitterer, and more dreadful even than the travail of His body." What an impression it should make upon our minds and hearts that, in being "wounded for our transgressions" and "bruised for our iniquities", He Who was thus wounded and bruised died for us literally of a broken heart!

DISCUSSION.

Rev. Joseph Corkey, LL.D., Glendermott, Londonderry, Ireland, said—I was glad to hear Mr. Acheson's Paper. We are often told that those who adhere to the exclusive use of the Psalms are old, fossilized individuals, and I was therefore specially pleased with the Paper written by our young friend, the Convener of the Hospitality Committee. Those of

us, ministers, who habitually use the Psalms, know we have no difficulty in finding suitable Psalms for any text we have. For a considerable number of years I had three services each Sabbath, and sometimes, besides family worship, a Sabbath-school. In these services I had to select from ten to thirteen portions of Psalms, and I never found any difficulty in getting suitable portions. Sometimes the difficulty was, out of several portions that presented themselves to me, to decide which to choose as the most suitable. I at one time lectured (excuse my referring to it) over the principal points in the history of the Old Testament, not going continuously through it, but taking up the salient points, and there was no event connected with the history of God's people of old for which, when I was dealing with it, I did not find a suitable Psalm, in one of the long, historical Psalms or in some of the other Psalms. There is not a single prominent event that has not an inspired comment upon it in some part of the Book of Psalms for our edification and for our singing. But in the hymn-books, you will find that this department of praise is entirely wanting. So far as I am acquainted with hymn-books, there is nothing whatever on this subject. How could men write anything that could be compared with those historical Psalms? As Dr John Edgar said long ago, "Under pretence of enlarging the sphere of our praise, hymn-singers have wretchedly curtailed it." There is not a book of songs that you will take up—even those that contain six hundred or seven hundred hymns each—that contains so much variety as you have in the Book of Psalms; for, as Mr. Acheson pointed out, every subject is taken up and dealt with. And though his Paper was very full, considering the limited time, yet paper after paper might be written showing how every subject in connection with the history of Redemption is found somewhere in the Psalms; and if people cannot find them, it is because they are not acquainted with the Book.

I desire especially to bear testimony to the fact that we who use the Psalms habitually, acquaint ourselves with them, and explain them to the people, never find any difficulty in getting a Psalm suitable for our subject.

Rev Professor Petticrew, M.A., D.D., D.Lit., Londonderry, Ireland, said—Dr. Corkey has referred to the great variety we have in the Book of Psalms, although there are only 150 pieces in it. While all are most suitable for the purpose for which they were given, everyone, with only two exceptions, is different from every other. That you may the better realize this characteristic of the Psalms, just go over, one by one, ten or twelve of them here and there through the

book. Take, for example, Psalms 20 to 34, or 61 to 73, and you will find each of them a perfect gem, and yet every one different from every other.

In an admirable little pamphlet, by the Rev. Dr. George, Allegheny, Pa., U.S.A., which, I understand, will be circulated this evening, you will find a statement to the effect that there is no book in the Bible that reveals Christ with such fulness as is done in the Book of Psalms, not excepting the Gospel according to John, or the Epistle to the Hebrews. The *British Weekly*, a short time ago, pointed out, in a leading article, that there was hardly a Psalm, if you looked into it carefully, in which you would not find traces of Christ. Take the first Psalm, the writer said, and several of the statements there are, in their fulness, true only of the Lord Jesus Christ. He meditated on God's law day and night. He never walked in the counsel of the ungodly, and whatever He did prospered. The pleasure of the Lord prospered in His hand. It is still true, as Bishop Horsley said, that "there is not a page in this Book of Psalms in which the pious reader will not find the Saviour, if he reads with a view of finding Him".

PRAISE—Psalm 68, 18-20.

THE PSALMS: THEIR INCOMPARABLE SUPERIORITY TO ALL UNINSPIRED SUBSTITUTES, AND THEIR UNCHANGING ADAPTATION TO THE SERVICE OF PRAISE.

By REV. WILLIAM DICK, M.A., Belfast, Ireland.

I. *The incomparable superiority of the Psalms to all uninspired substitutes.* By the term "incomparable" we mean "admitting of no comparison with others"; and we use the term in the strictest sense. We are to prove that there is strictly no comparison between the Psalms and uninspired substitutes; and we shall present no less than twenty points in which an intelligent hymn-singer ought at once to acknowledge that the superiority of the Psalms is strictly incomparable.

Among songs of praise—

1. They and they only are supernaturally inspired. Their inspiration is not the merely natural or poetic inspiration of which we sometimes speak, but is of that miraculous kind which belongs to the Bible only, of which they are a part. The claim of the Psalmist—"the Spirit of the Lord spake by [or in] me, and His word was upon my tongue"—is acknowledged to be true by Christ and His Apostles. Christ recognized the Psalms as Holy Scripture, rested an argument on a single word, declared that the Scripture (from which that word was taken) could not be broken, and taught His disciples that everything foretold about Himself in the Psalms *must* be fulfilled. All this means that the Psalms are wholly the Word of God: God is the author of every Psalm, and of every sentiment and word in each. This inspiration by God lifts the Psalms as high above uninspired hymns as the heavens are above the earth. No finite mind could fully tell the incomparable superiority which the Psalms derive from their Divine Authorship.

2. They and they only are infallibly true and absolutely holy. In the matter of truth and holiness they are all that God, their Author, would have them to be. What shall we say of uninspired hymns? Are they not from fallible and sinful man? We read recently an able pamphlet which shewed that most of the popular hymns are the productions of gross errorists, such as Romanists, Ritualists, Arians, and Rationalists, and that some were written by apostates, persecutors, or sensualists; and it was asked if such productions ought to be lifted above, or even put on a level with, the Songs of God's own Spirit. The argument is a valid one, but we think we can dispense with it, the case for the Psalms is so strong; and, as a matter of expediency, it may be better to dispense with it, as some might think that if saints had written all the hymns there would be no objection to sing them in the worship of God. We shall *suppose*, therefore, for the sake of argument—we are far indeed from *granting* anything so palpably absurd—that hymns are all written by saints. What is a saint? Is he either sinless or infallible? He is neither. The better he is, the more he is ready to confess, with sorrow, that darkness and sin dwell in him. When he goes to God in prayer, he confesses that in thought, feeling, aspiration, and purpose he is corrupt, and he perhaps says that he leaves the print of his unclean hands on his best performances. Is this confession perfectly true? If it is true, truer even than he knows, how can the hymn he may compose be throughout perfectly true and holy? Can the stream rise higher than its source? Surely not. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."

We may see no error in the literary product, or "best performance"; there may be very little error in it; but we have no guarantee that error is wholly absent. There may be a mere suggestion of falsity, or merely a partial suppression of truth; or the statement of various truths in their relations to each other may be ill-balanced and misleading, as being, perhaps, the product of some morbid mood; but from an erroneous source error of some sort to some degree will flow, and will exercise its native effect not the less, but all the more, that it is not suspected. God will see it, and will not put the sacrifice of praise that contains it on a level with the absolutely spotless sacrifice which He has Himself provided. It may be said that this doctrine of the inability of sinful and fallible man to produce perfectly true, holy, and otherwise suitable songs would strike also against the Psalms, as being composed by David, who was a man, and who once sinned enormously. The answer is obvious. A specific miracle—inspiration—was wrought for the very purpose of keeping David's imperfections from getting into the Psalms. But no miracle is wrought to save the hymn. The corrupt tree, therefore, bears fruit after its kind: the hymn naturally and necessarily reflects the spiritual imperfection of its origin.

3. They and they only are Divinely-appointed for praise. Their use is commanded in the Old Testament and in the New. Uninspired hymns have not been Divinely-appointed. The candid hymn-singer will at once admit this; but he will perhaps add that a Divine appointment is unnecessary. This principle, however, would take away partially or entirely from God His right to legislate for worship without a rival, and would make all His appointments void and contemptible. To set aside His appointments is to set aside His authority, and to turn worship into rebellion. To carry out, in worship, our own will instead of God's is represented in Scripture as not only a sin, but as a specially aggravated sin. When we use an uninspired hymn we expose ourselves to His awful challenge—"Who hath required this at your hand?" But when we use a Psalm we know that so far we are taking the way of God, which is the way of acceptance and blessing. We are acting by the authority of Christ, Who is our sole Legislator in worship.

4. They and they only can claim to be prophetic in substance. They are thus able to help our fellowship with the everlasting God, to signalize the unity of the Divine plan, the perpetuity of the Church, the certainty of the vindication of every righteous cause, and to guide us Divinely to true and holy views of the coming of Christ's Kingdom.

5. They and they only were used by the Church of old, by

Christ, and by the Apostles. When we sing the Psalms we join with God's Church of old in a part of its worship that was as non-ceremonial as the Ten Commandments. If Christ honoured and sung the Psalms, their spirit must be suited to the worshipper who has the spirit of Christ. They received Divinely authoritative recognition by the Apostles, who, not by precept only but by their example, settled the Praise Service and whole genius of the Christian Dispensation.

6. They and they only contain an original and Divinely-full revelation of the spiritual experience of Christ. In fact, it is to them we must chiefly look for this experience. The Gospels deal rather with the public life of Christ—that is, with His words and actions; while the Psalms, in connection with a Covenant typology, and through the inspiration of One Who knows the end from the beginning, disclose the inner life of Christ—that is, His faith, hope, devotion, sorrows, patience, aspirations, supplications, and triumphs. This embodiment of Christ's experience explains the *apparent* self-consciousness of the Psalms, and distinguishes it from the *real* self-consciousness—the morbid and sentimental self-consciousness of hymns. Why is David so much in evidence in Holy Writ, and especially in the Psalms? Is it to glorify the literal David by obtruding him upon the Church? No. It is because he was a type of Christ. In the Psalms the spiritual experience of David, the type, is a glass in which to see the spiritual experience of the Antitype. Why is this provision made for us? Is it not that we may, in connection with the type, study our Divine Model, the New Testament David, in His spiritual experience as well as in His public life? That is the grand reason why the spiritual experience of David was embodied in Holy Writ, and why, by the Spirit of inspiration, it was recorded only in as far as it was the product of Divine grace and fitted to be a model one, or typify the real Model. Nor need any one point out that such an exalted relationship to Christ would tempt men to idolize David. The tremendous lapse and humble confessions of David dispel, in God's wise providence, any such danger. We need hardly add that these confessions of *real* guilt on the part of David are confessions of *imputed* or voluntarily assumed guilt on the part of Christ. Perhaps the enormity of David's guilt typifies the enormity of Christ's imputed guilt. And the strangeness of the commission of so great sin by the man after God's own heart, typifies the strangeness of the imputation of all His people's guilt to the absolutely holy Son of God. In this way the sorrowful confessions of David suggest to us the righteousness of Christ, and so lead us on to joy and praise.

7. They and they only were quoted, appropriated, and

fulfilled by Christ. He died with some of their words on His lips. And the Gospels declare many circumstances in His death to be a fulfilment of other words of the Psalms.

8. They and they only can be guaranteed to be wholly Christian in sentiment. They were all composed by Christ as the great Prophet, and all appointed by Christ as the great King. Even in the 69th Psalm, which some professing Christians rashly call unchristian, we learn from the New Testament that it is Christ Himself Who speaks. Is it necessary for us to prove that what He says is Christian? If the Psalms are unchristian in spirit, and, therefore, unfit to be sung in praise, they must be unfit to be read "for instruction in righteousness". What a fearful thing it is to imply that the words of Christ are unchristian, and unfit to be sung or read by the Christian! And the really deficient Christianity of many who take this fantastically high position is disclosed by the fact that they are not conspicuous for forgiveness of their own personal enemies. They cannot bear with their own enemies, but can *easily* bear with Christ's enemies—that is, the public enemies of truth and righteousness, the impenitent enemies of God and persecutors of His saints. This spirit is directly opposed to, and impliedly claims to be more Christian than, the spirit of Christ Himself. He ever infinitely hates and zealously wars against all error and unrighteousness and all impenitent enemies of God. If the Psalms breathe this spirit of Christ, that only proves them to be truly Christian, while the want of it only proves uninspired hymns to be unchristian. The Psalms breathe the spirit also of the saints in glory who, we know, will judge fallen angels and impenitent men. And it is surely no more unchristian for the ripest saints on earth to sing God-inspired Psalms, which set forth the punitive administration of Christ, Who "in righteousness doth judge and make war", than it will be unchristian for saints in the perfect holiness of heaven to be assessors with Christ, the Judge, in condemning the impenitent to everlasting punishment.

9. They and they only were composed in adequate knowledge of, and perfect sympathy with, revealed truth about the perfections of God and the imperfections of man. The Psalms are themselves revealed truth, and are thus absolutely trustworthy and God-glorifying as a vehicle of praise. An uninspired psalmist would not be trusted by God to determine for His trustfully worshipping people the conceptions they should entertain of God and Christ, of self and sin, of redemption and worship. God has proved His Godhead by framing the Praise Service Himself, instead of leaving it to be framed by the heart of fallen man, which is naturally at enmity with God and spiritual worship.

But it may be asked, What about uninspired preaching? Do the songs in the Praise Service need to be Divinely-inspired any more than the sermon needs to be? To this we reply: (1) God has made a difference. He inspired the Psalms, but He does not inspire the sermon. (2) The Psalms are the people's sacrifice to God; the sermon is not. (3) The sermon admits of and, in a certain sense, invites criticism; while criticism of the Psalms is blasphemy and is absolutely fatal to the right singing of them in praise. (4) The sermon professes to be based on God's Word, and is constantly referring to it; the Psalms stand on their own authority. (5) The sermon, as a sermon, passes away; the Psalms remain to constantly purify the Church, and, alas! hymns, wherever they have supplanted the Psalms, remain to constantly corrupt the Church.

10. They and they only, as being supernatural themselves, are adequately fitted to express God's supernatural work of grace in the soul. He Who produced supernatural life in the soul by regeneration, produced by inspiration supernatural songs to nourish that life and adequately express its supernatural emotions. The miracle of inspiration thus corresponds to the miracle of regeneration. Deep calls to deep.

11. They and they only are inexhaustible. No detailed proof of this affirmation is necessary. It is evident from the fact that they are God's own product and are like Himself.

12. They and they only are absolutely innocuous. While hymns, in proportion to their ineptitude and error, injure the soul, the Psalms, being the pure truth of God, cannot injure but can only bless. So also, while compliance with the Divine appointment not only is obedience to God, but promotes obedience everywhere, the rejection of that appointment is disobedience and promotes disobedience everywhere. Worship, when it thus embodies error and disobedience, becomes a source of moral corruption. And no one who deliberately sets aside God's will in worship can consistently stand for God's will in any public question.

13. They and they only are above criticism. The Psalm-singer rightly regards it as nothing less than blasphemy to criticise the Psalms unfavourably, seeing they are the very words of God. The hymn-singer, on the other hand, claims the right to criticise his hymn-book most unfavourably, just as an idolater scolds and scourges his idol, when it does not please him.

14. They and they only are of such an authority that it is positively sinful to reject them or dispense with them. No such claim could or would be made on behalf of hymns. Hymn-singers, in introducing hymns into God's worship, do not act in even *professed* obedience to His will, but only

according to supposed liberty and their own pleasure. They do not refer to God's will at all, but instinctively avoid taking, in their argument, such high and holy ground. The hymn-singer knows that if self-will, in the absence of Divine appointment, bring hymns into the worship of God, self-will has as good a right to cast them out again. On the other hand, to leave Psalms out, or cast them out, is to reject a Divine ordinance and disobey a Divine command.

15. They and they only can be used without the suspicion of wounding conscience. What God, in His infinite love, ordains for the Church, cannot injure, vex, or humiliate anyone. It is very different with man's unwarrantable ordinances in worship. They are causing the bitterest heart-burnings, which really amount to persecution of many who are loyal to Christ in the matter of worship.

16. They and they only are unsectarian and, of course, free from all tendency to promote sectarianism. *They can be used by all;* and their use by all would tend to unify the Church universal.

17. They and they only are immortal. Hymns are framed to express the ideas and moods of one age, and so are unsatisfactory to those of another. Hymns die, like their authors; while Psalms, as the work of God, live on.

18. They and they only have reared an orthodox, militant, and martyr Church. We do not say *can rear*, but are just now content to say "have reared", for we are now confining ourselves to points that a hymn-singer ought at once to admit, and we could not expect him to admit that hymns cannot succeed on this point if we only give them time. They have not *yet* done so.

19. They and they only as being, not a ceremonial, but an eminently spiritual, part of God's gracious Revelation, transcend and are fitted to increase the most advanced holiness found on earth. They are specially clung to at the dying hour, and as having themselves come from behind the veil, they are felt to be worthy to conduct the soul within the veil, while all the babble of earth is left behind.

20. They and they only are unquestionably fitted to exalt and purify the highest and purest praise on earth. The praise ideal of the hymn-writers may be transcended by that of some worshippers that are not hymn-writers at all. On the other hand, the Psalms were given by the Holy Spirit to be, not only the material of praise, but the standard or model of man's spirit in praise, as well as to be an inexhaustible fountain of praise. They must, therefore, ever transcend, and be ever calculated to exalt and purify, all the praise, necessarily imperfect, that will ever be found on earth.

These twenty points of comparison, or contrast, establish the incomparable superiority of the Psalms to all uninspired substitutes. And one of these points, the Divine appointment of the Psalms, establishes also the exclusive adaptation of the Psalms to the Service of Praise. God has ever vindicated for every appointment of His the right, not to share a place of honour with some rival appointment of man's, but to monopolize the place of honour and sit as a king on a throne. As there is but one Mediator to the exclusion of every other, and but one Bible to the exclusion of the Apocrypha or Koran, so there is but one Book of Psalms. And as the most dangerously effective way of getting rid of Christ's Mediatorship is not to openly deny it but to invent other mediators, so the surest way to succeed in making void the inspired Psalms is to put uninspired substitutes on the same level.

II. *The unchanging adaptation of the Psalms to the Service of Praise.* Have the Psalms lost, or may they not lose, their adaptation to the Service of Praise? We present the following reasons for believing that their adaptation is unchanging:—

1. The Scriptures do not contain the slightest hint that God has recalled, or that He ever will recall, the Psalms from their high and exclusive position in His praise. Every sentiment and every word in them were selected by the unchanging God for the purpose of praise. He only Who gave the Psalms has a right to recall them. He has not done so.

2. God has never appointed, nor has He given us any reason to expect that He ever will appoint, any substitute. If He has not only in the Old Testament given the Psalms for praise, but has, in the New, when He was again settling the Church's praise, given no substitute for the Psalms, surely His glory is doubly involved in their perfect, exclusive, and unchanging adaptation to the Service of Praise.

3. A moral and spiritual provision, like the Psalms, cannot become antiquated, or be discredited in the least, by the abrogation of mere ceremonies. The sacrifices were abolished in "the fulness of the time". But how? Was it not by the sacrifice of Christ, Who was given by God to fulfil them or take their place? If the Psalms, though moral and spiritual in their nature—nay, more, inbreathed by the Holy Spirit and authoritatively appointed for praise—be abolished (which is an obviously incredible assumption), what has God given to take *their* place? Nothing. They are not of such a nature as to admit of being displaced. They have a moral and spiritual, and, therefore, an unchanging life.

4. Miraculously inspired song was necessary to the purpose of the Mediator of old, for had it not been necessary He

would not have given it; and there are overwhelming reasons for believing that it is equally necessary to His purpose now. No doubt, there is a larger effusion of the Spirit in the Christian Dispensation than in the Mosaic. This fact, however, while it might excite some to ask why God did not give us, by inspiration, a new and better Psalter (that is, if the old one were inadequate), could never justify us in believing that God has taken the only inspired Psalter away. The spirit of specific inspiration, though it prevailed in Apostolic days, produced no Psalter: that spirit is gone for ever. The effect, then, of the larger effusion of the Spirit (now that the specific inspiration which alone could provide us with an inspired Psalter and, therefore, with adequate expression, is wholly absent) is to create a larger demand for adequate expression, and so to make more imperatively necessary the supernaturally inexhaustible Psalter which God had already given. God has not, in the Christian Dispensation, produced a more Christian Psalter, but He enables His people to make a more richly Christian use of the Psalter already given.

5. The Psalms are a delineation of God's unchanging perfections by the Spirit of God. The Eternal speaks in them of the Eternal. In this august testimony the Divine Speaker, the Divine Subject, and the inspired predicate are alike free from all change. To set aside such peerless testimony, even for a moment, is to obscure revelation rather than to make it clearer in our praise.

6. The Psalms reveal the unchanging Christ. They embody His spiritual experience as our unchanging model; and they glory in His boundless dominion which is for ever. They shew Him in His untransferable priesthood, and as the Prophet declaring to His brethren the name of God, and that, too, according to a Covenant that is not temporary but from everlasting to everlasting.

7. The spiritual life, supernaturally produced in man by regeneration, remains for ever the same in its nature, its wants, its conditions of progress, and its demand for adequate expression. As in all ages the new nature is the same, and its emotions the same, the miraculous *spiritual* provision made by God to express these emotions duly in one age must express them in every age. It may be said that there is a greater degree of spiritual life to express now. Even if this is so, if the spiritual life now exceeds, in its degree, the spiritual life of Moses, David, and Elijah, the Psalms, which, as embodying the spiritual experience of Christ, were by God's Spirit necessarily framed to far outstrip the highest attainments of God's people then, must be regarded as outstripping the highest attainments of God's people now, just as the moral law then

given far outstrips the morality of the best times in this Christian Dispensation.

8. The Psalms are ever needed to bring out, in God's worship, His fierce hatred of idolatry, whether gross or subtle. Their disuse has opened the door to lax views about idolatry in both Church and State.

9. The doctrines of grace, which are enshrined in the Psalms, make them a Divinely authoritative and powerful check on the inevitable tendency of the Church to sink into humanitarianism and Ritualism. This tendency is persistent, and would soon assimilate to itself an uninspired, and, therefore, modifiable material of praise. As Adam, by eating the forbidden fruit, did not become a god, but lost the primeval glory of humanity, so hymns introduced to make the Praise Service Christian, forsooth! would end by gradually despoiling it of its Christianity, and making it positively antichristian. While the hymns thus tend to become ever more corrupt, and proportionally to corrupt the Church, the Psalms, as being the unchanging embodiment of heaven's pure redemptive truth, would, if retained in the Praise Service, tend not only to keep the Church from falling, but to lift it ever higher.

It is evident, therefore, that the Psalms ever Divinely tend to progress, while hymns admit of, and indeed tend to ensure, retrogression to man's natural error and sin. And not only does error naturally and necessarily creep in, but it is thenceforth allowed to remain undisturbed, owing to the fact that it is in a written manual of praise and that it is used reverently and constantly in *worship*. We are here reminded of a remark made by Mackenzie in his book called "America", where he is speaking of the idolatrous religion of the old native Mexicans: "Here, as it has been elsewhere, a religion which in its origin was a mere reflexion of the good and evil existing in the character of the people, stamped divine sanction on their errors, and thus rendered progress impossible." Hymns also, being a mere changeable reflexion of men's imperfect character, tend to ensure retrogression and prevent progress. The Psalms, on the other hand, being wholly from the God of redemption, and, like Him, free from change of nature, tend to prevent retrogression and ensure progress.

10. The Psalms are ever most powerful fashioners of the soul in uncompromising zeal for God, truth, and righteousness in all the relations of life. This blessed effect of theirs, while it makes them distasteful to a carnal world and to the remains of sin in the believer's heart, is dear to God, and one of their crowning excellencies to the spiritual mind.

11. The Psalms are needed and calculated to generate true praise as well as to express it. Christians need more than

poetical material for praise. They need the spirit of praise. And where can this spirit come from but from the Bible, and especially from the Book of Psalms, in which the only One Who knows perfectly what true praise is has shown us what it is?

12. The greatest light to which the Church in the future can reach will only unfold more of the Divine excellence of the Psalms, and will discover in them no flaw.

13. The Psalms are new songs, in the best sense of the term "new", and must remain so to the end of the world. Hymn-singers groundlessly call the Psalms old and hymns new. (1) The Psalms are seen to be absolutely new when we consider their composition or authorship. Not one sentiment or word in them came "by the will of man." Therefore, they are not tainted, in any sense or degree, by the old nature in man. They are wholly from inspired men, or, rather, wholly from the eternal God, Who inspired these men. Hymns, on the other hand, as being the uninspired product of imperfect man—of man short-sighted in spiritual perception and perverse in will—are *partly* derived, as far as their substance is concerned, from the old nature in man, and are thus tainted more or less by that old nature. And the taint ever remains and constantly exerts an evil influence. This is one infinitely important respect in which it must be held that it is really the Psalm that is new and the hymn that is old. (2) The Psalms are seen to be absolutely new when we consider their design. They were all designed in infinite wisdom to meet the necessities of the new nature in man by Him Who alone fully understands those necessities. Hymns, on the other hand, were designed by man who is not only imperfectly acquainted with the necessities of the new nature, but is liable through self-deception to seek design, and provide for the gratification of the old nature, even when he is ostensibly engaged in worship, and, in particular, when he is composing or selecting songs for the Praise Service. The songs which the old nature clamours for, and secures, may well be suspected to be, in a greater or less degree, old songs, while the Psalms, as being designed by God for the *new nature only*, are indisputably new songs. (3) Psalms are seen to be absolutely new when we consider their appointment. The corrupt will, or old nature in man, had nothing to do with the appointment of any of them: God appointed them all. Hymns, on the other hand, are all destitute of appointment by God, and, as being thrust unwarrantably into a sphere—Divine worship—in which a Divine appointment is absolutely indispensable, and especially as displacing God's appointment there, they all derive their appointment *wholly* from the old nature in man—that is, from

man's ignorance, vanity, self-will, and rebellion against God. The taint of this disobedience *ever* cleaves to the use of hymns in the worship of God, and constantly exerts, as we have already seen, an influence in the direction of lawlessness, while the reverent use of the Psalms, which are Divinely-appointed, has an exactly opposite influence. Here again, it is easily seen that it is the Psalm that is new and the hymn that is old.

14. The Psalms Divinely celebrate Providential wonders that are typical of the evolutions of Providence in the future. Much was wrapped up in a type. The view it gives of coming events is not only true but eminently suggestive and far-reaching. This being so, we have in the Psalms (1) a Divinely true and appropriate expression of praise to be used by those who shall witness the events, (2) a key to the right study of public events, (3) an incentive to patience in present troubles and to holy hopefulness about the future, and (4) a constant lesson in public spirit.

15. We can, without changing the words of the Psalms, sing them all in the name of Christ; and singing them intelligently in His name will bring into our Praise Service all the light which the New Testament has thrown upon that name. There is no hint that the Apostles ever changed the words of any Psalm when they were singing it in praise, and we know that their Praise Service, like all the rest of their worship, was rendered in the name of the fully revealed Christ, and was thus a distinctively *Christian* service—that is, Christian as distinguished from Mosaic. We do not mean merely that theirs was a Christian service because it was based on the work of Christ, for the Old Testament praise was also based on that work. Nor do we mean merely that their service was Christian because of Gospel facts and Christ's spiritual experience which the Psalms contain. Nor do we mean merely that their service was, in its authority, thenceforth distinctively Christian because the inspired legislation of the Apostles set that service authoritatively in the Christian Dispensation, the Psalms becoming henceforth the exclusive property of the Christian Church, as the Jewish had ceased to exist. We hold *all* that, but we mean much more. We mean that this Praise Service of the Apostles was distinctively Christian because it introduced all the clearer light of the New Testament or New Dispensation. If it is asked, How did this New Testament light get into a praise service in which the Psalms alone were used, we reply, that it got in not by any change in the words which the Apostles sung, but by the Christian illumination of the faith in which they sung

them. They sung them in the name of Christ, and, therefore, in full view of all they knew about Christ.

No one can reasonably say by way of objection, when we thus associate the "name of Christ" with the Apostles' Praise Service, that we are bringing in an alien or irrelevant element into the question of praise for argumentative purposes—that is, to prove that this Praise Service, though confined to the use of the Psalms, was and is distinctively Christian. To act in the name of Christ is not an alien or irrelevant thing in praise: it is absolutely essential and indispensably necessary to praise. Praise without it would not be praise at all. Even hymns, if they could be legitimately sung in praise, would require, in spite of and in addition to all their abundant use of Christian terminology, to be sung in "the name of Christ". But if singing in the name of Christ—i.e., (1) by His authority, (2) in dependence on His mediation for acceptance in praise, and (3) according *to the clearest light God has given us concerning Christ*—is an essential and indispensably necessary element in the Praise Service, it is clear that this element is, as it were, a window by which *all* Gospel light can come into our Praise Service without the change of the words of the Psalms.

It may be said that if singing Psalms in "the name of Christ" brings the fullest Christian light into the Psalms, singing hymns in that name will perhaps make up all their supposed defects, and, in particular, their lack of inspiration and of Divine appointment. But the clearer Gospel light, while it helps us to understand more fully the inspired Revelation in the Psalms, obviously cannot *give inspiration* to the uninspired hymn. Moreover, as singing in "the name of Christ" means singing by the authority of Christ, hymns cannot be sung in "the name of Christ", for they have not His authority: they are wholly destitute of appointment by Christ. The Psalms alone are Divinely-appointed. What He does not appoint in worship He forbids. To claim to sing hymns, in the Praise Service, by the authority of Christ would be claiming from Him authority to set aside His authority. It would be an attempt to commit Him to the substitution of the uninspired and the virtually forbidden for the inspired and the Divinely-appointed. It would be trying to commit Him to the honouring of man's self-will in worship, and to the preference of man's imperfect songs to the Songs of the Holy Spirit.

The relation of the "name of Christ" to praise provides full scope for distinctively Christian thought and feeling when we sing the Psalms, and fully explains why, in our Praise Service, we use songs in which the terms, "Bethlehem," "manger," "mother," "cross," "spear," "nails," "blood," &c., are absent. Many, like the hymn-writers, fondle such terms

idolatrously, and would do so especially in God's praise. Perhaps that is one reason why God's Spirit excluded these terms from inspired song. All the meaning of these Gospel terms (and that, surely, is the paramount consideration) can come into the Praise Service, though the terms themselves are not used. And it is unspeakably better to have (in the Christian use of a Divinely-appointed and inspired vehicle of praise) the meaning without the mere terms than to have (in an uninspired, forbidden, and, in most cases, a most superficial, sentimental, and erroneous vehicle of praise) the terms without the true meaning. We ought indeed, in our song, to praise the Father not only for the glorious attributes, purposes, and doings of the Godhead, but for the work of Christ. But this involves references not to every minute detail, but to the great matters connected with the Person and offices of Christ, His spiritual experience, His sufferings and exaltation, His shepherdly care, &c.; and these are admittedly found in the Psalms. Of course these references, as made more explicit by Gospel light, which the sermon is constantly flashing on our minds, have a fulness of meaning for us which they had not for the Church of the Old Testament. We sing in that fulness of light. But is not this to conjoin our own thoughts with the inspired Psalms? No; it is to conjoin the New Testament with the Old; it is to praise God in the words indeed of the Old Testament, but in the light of the inspired words of all Christian references in the Old Testament and the New.

This relationship of the name of Christ to the Praise Service makes "His praise glorious", in addition to the glory that it has from the inspiration and Divine appointment of the Psalms. When we sing praise, Christ, according to His promise—"In the midst of the congregation [that is, the whole Christian Church] will I sing Thy praise"—is our Leader in praise, and has the right to select songs of praise which are worthy of Himself and best fitted to excite the deepest yearnings after holiness in His people. What can these songs be but the Psalms, which are all and altogether written by Himself? They are a spotless sacrifice of praise and, therefore, such a sacrifice as He can offer. Of course, our offering of the Psalms, perfect though they are, is defective in spirit and needs His atonement and intercession to render it acceptable to a holy God. But while He accepts a Divinely-appointed worship from a believing, penitent worshipper, He has not promised to accept the worshipper who presumptuously and impenitently prefers man's songs to God's Psalms, and thus puts worship offered in the name or by the authority of man above worship offered in the name or by the authority of Christ. That, in the worship of God,

nothing but Psalms can be sung in the name or by the authority of Christ, lifts them immeasurably above all other songs; and singing God's own Songs in that name gives the Praise Service a moral and spiritual majesty that infinitely transcends that of any service of uninspired song, and pales all the splendours of a materialistic and sensuous Ritualism. If the Church could only remember that praise quite as much as prayer must be offered in the "name of Christ"—but this truth seems in our day to be very generally forgotten, at least at the time when God's praise is being sung—there would be a vivid realization of the unspeakable majesty of the Praise Service which is rendered according to God's simple plan; and there would be no tendency to yearn for the irrelevancy and pettiness of Ritualistic ornamentations, or to substitute, in the worship of God, our own compositions for heaven's incomparable Psalmody.

PRAISE—Psalm 72, 17-20. BENEDICTION.

THURSDAY, 7th AUGUST.

EVENING MEETING, from 7-30 to 10 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN:—

REV. PROFESSOR JOHN LYND, D.D., Belfast, Ireland.

PRAISE—Psalm 23.

Rev. James Henry, Cahans, Monaghan, Ireland, led in prayer.

Rev. Dr. Petticrew, one of the Secretaries, announced that the following *Cablegram* had been received:—

"To Psalm-singers' Conference, Belfast. Psalm-singing thousands in Iowa quote Philemon three [*]—

"Lowry, Clarinda."

Reply Cablegram was as follows:—

"To Reverend Lowry, Clarinda, Iowa. Chairman, Psalm-singers' Conference, quotes Titus, last verse." [†]

Chairman's Address:—

A remark was made at one of these meetings to the effect that the spirit of innovation, the spirit that introduces hymns by way of supplementing or displacing the Psalms, is really

* "Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

† "All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen."

one with the spirit of the "Higher" Criticism of the present day. The theory of natural development, at first applied merely to the physical world, has been carried into the sphere of religion, and it underlies the whole tone and spirit of the "Higher" Critics. The revelation that we have in the Scriptures, we believe, came direct from God. He spake. There is a Divine beginning in Revelation as there is in material things. But, according to the "Higher" Critics in general, the beginning is with man himself. There is first fetish worship, and then higher forms of worship are gradually evolved. Polytheism, according to one of these critics, was the oldest form of religion: Monotheism, or the doctrine of one God, grew out of this. So what we have in the Scriptures is a record merely of the progress of man's religious conceptions. If this be so, we may sit in judgment on our Bibles. The Old Testament is in such case simply a record of what the Jews thought about religion. Now this is the spirit underlying the "Higher" Criticism; and the very same spirit, unconsciously no doubt on the part of many, underlies the whole movement in favour of the substitution of hymns for Psalms. We had a Paper last night on the "imprecatory" Psalms, and in the Paper we had this elevated thought brought before us, that the Psalms represent the mind of Christ. This is true. But the idea of hymnologists is, that the Psalms represent merely the views of the Jews, and that the standard of morality was not so high then as it is now. Why then, they ask, cannot we have something better in these more enlightened days? And so the "imprecatory" Psalms are made to serve as a kind of starting point for the argument in favour of hymns. I take it that we who are here believe that God revealed Himself in His Word, and that holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We do not sit in judgment on this Book and try the writers of it, but we hear what God the Lord speaks.

The Psalms are to us the Spirit of God speaking in the lives, through the intelligences, through the spiritual sympathies and spiritual experiences of godly men, who were not only illuminated but inspired to make known the Divine character and reveal to us the truth. For the benefit of our friends who contend that we need something more than the Psalms to express our religious feelings, let me read a sentence or two from one of the ablest of the "Higher" Critics, the late Dr. Robertson Smith. He says—"The liturgical character of the Psalms explains their individuality and justifies the large use made of them in the Christian Church. As a liturgical collection the Psalter expresses the feelings, hopes, faith, prayers, and praises of the Old Testament Church—

their sense of sin, and their joyful apprehension of God's salvation. These are the subjective elements of religion, the answer of the believing heart to God; and precisely in these elements the religion of all ages is much alike. The New Testament Revelation made a great change in the objective elements of religion. Old ideas and forms passed away, and new things took their place; but with all this growth of the objective side of Revelation the devotion of the heart to God remains essentially one and the same. Our faith, our sense of sin, our trust upon God and His salvation, the language of our prayers and praises, are still one with those of the Old Testament Church." I make a present of these remarks of Dr. Robertson Smith to our friends who cannot find adequate expression for Christian thought and feelings in the Psalms. Holding such views it is not to be wondered at that when conducting public worship he never used anything but Psalms in the Ordinance of Praise.

We have one test by which we try the spirits and by which we try the various doctrines and commandments of men. Our religion has Christ for its centre; and we ask regarding anything that is proposed to be introduced, regarding any doctrine or any mode of worship—Does it honour the Lord and Redeemer? Does it exalt Him? Our religion is Christocentric. That is, it has Christ at the heart of it—Christ the Revealer of God's will, the Revealer of the Father; Christ the Priest offering Himself; Christ the King ruling on His throne; Christ the Example in leading His people.

Now, as to these Psalms I can say nothing more than has been said to-day already. Christ is in the Psalms; Christ is exalted in the Psalms; and the cause that we are dealing with here is Christ's cause. There is no cause worth battling for that has not Christ at the heart of it, and He is at the heart of this one. His honour is here. But hymn-singers tell us they introduce hymns in order that they may honour Christ. If so, is it not a strange thing that where the hymns are used there comes to be sometimes a low, sometimes an ordinary, and more often a narrow conception of Christ? and a narrow conception is always low. Who of those who have been sticking faithfully to the use of the Psalms as given of God for His Worship have failed to honour the Lord Jesus Christ? Who among those who use the Psalms only have depreciated His priestly work? Who among them deny His royal authority? Who among those singing these Psalms lack faith and hope in the extension of His kingdom, till

> All heathen lands and kingly thrones
> On earth His glorious name shall fear?

When we come to worship God we want something that elevates, something that lifts us higher and higher every time we come, that leads us to exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" and that moves us to seek that we may apprehend the length and the breadth of the thought of God, and "the love of Christ which passeth knowledge."

TESTIMONY OF HYMN-SINGERS TO THE SUPERIORITY OF THE PSALMS.

By REV. PROFESSOR D. A. M'CLENAHAN, D.D.,
Allegheny, Pa., U.S.A.

The glowing tributes to the superiority of the Psalms have in almost, if not every case, been gladly rendered. They have been the expression of real and enthusiastic admiration for the Psalms. They have come from hearts aglow with love for these Divine odes. The people who have studied the Psalter the most are the loudest in their praises of its unsurpassable excellence. The man who speaks slightingly of the Psalms thereby advertises himself as ignorant of their contents and their spirit.

Canon Driver, in his "Introduction to the Old Testament", written in 1892, says, "In the Psalter the devotional element of the religious character finds its completest expression; and the soul is displayed in converse with God, disclosing to Him its manifold emotions, desires, aspirations, or fears. It is the surprising variety of mood and subject and occasion in the Psalms which gives them their catholicity; and, combined with their deep spirituality, fits them to be the hymn-book not only of the Second Temple, but of the Christian Church." That is the estimate of one of the most scholarly men of England of this age.

The late W. Robertson Smith, formerly of Glasgow, but later of Oxford, says in his "The Old Testament in the Jewish Church", "Again, although the Psalms represent a great range of individual religious experience, it is to be noticed that they avoid such situations and expressions as are of too unique a character to be used in the devotion of other believers. The

* Read by Rev. T. E. Moffat, Paterson, New Jersey, U.S.A.

feelings expressed in the Psalms are mainly such as can be shared by every devout soul, if not in every circumstance, yet at least in circumstances which frequently recur in human life. Some of the Psalms are manifestly written from the first with a general devotional purpose, as prayers or praises, which can be used in any mouth. In others, again, the poet seems to speak not in his private person, but in the name of the people of God as a whole; and even the Psalms, more directly individual in occasion, have so much catholicity of sentiment that they have served with the other hymns of the Psalter as a manual of devotion for the Church of all ages in both dispensations. . . . . As a liturgical collection, the Psalter expresses the feelings and hopes, the faith, the prayers and the praises of the Old Testament Church, their sense of sin, and their joyful apprehension of God's salvation. These are the subjective elements of religion, the answer of the believing heart to God. And precisely in these elements the religion of all ages is much alike. The New Testament revelation made a great change in the objective elements of religion. Old ideas and forms passed away, and new things took their place; but through all this growth of the objective side of revelation, the devotion of the faithful heart to God remains essentially one and the same. Our faith, our sense of sin, our trust upon God and His salvation, the language of our prayers and praises are still one with those of the Old Testament Church. It is true that not a little of the colouring of the Psalms is derived from the ritual and order of the Old Dispensation, and has now become antiquated; but practical religion does not refuse those bonds of connection with the past. The believing soul is never anxious to separate its own spiritual life from the spiritual life of the fathers. Rather does it cling with special affection to the links that unite it to the Church of the Old Testament; and the forms, which, in their literal sense, are now antiquated, become to us an additional group of figures in the rich poetic imagery of the Hebrew Hymnal."

Dr. Smith has caught the true purpose of praise to God, and in his unapproached perspicuity has shown how fully the Psalms supply the worshipper with the true matter of praise.

Dr. Charles A. Briggs of Union Theological Seminary, New York, is, both in Europe and America, conceded to be one of the profoundest scholars of this age. Some years ago, Dr. Briggs in reviewing a radical German work on the Psalms, said—"The result [of radical criticism] has ever been and will ever be to enlarge knowledge of sacred things, to revive reverence of the majesty and glory of God, Who has in His grace provided the Psalter as the best means of devotion for His people in all time. In our days modern Christian hymns

are rapidly displacing the Psalter in our Churches. It will be a great blessing if the Higher Criticism should result in a revived interest in this prayer-book of all prayer-books, this hymn-book of all hymn-books."

Notice that Dr. Briggs not only calls the Psalter the "hymn-book of all hymn-books", but says it is "the best means of devotion for His [God's] people in all time."

The late Thomas Chalmers Murray, the gifted Professor of Semitic languages in the John Hopkins University, whose life was cut short in the very beginning of what promised to be a most brilliant career, but who left a monument to his scholarship and spirit in his book, "Origin and Growth of the Psalms," says, speaking of David in this book, "His authentic writings will hand him down to all future time as the world's greatest master of lyric song. He has entered closest to the heart of nature; he has caught, as none other, its ever manifold expresssion; he has soared nearest heaven, and lifted mankind toward Divinity."

Speaking of the Psalter as a whole, Murray says again—"The poetry of the Bedouin, sprung from their transparent air and long reaches of desert, lacks, perhaps, that perfect form and workmanship in which the Greeks are masters of the world. But in what lies nearer to the essence of true poetry, the power to paint nature and gather in a single word the manifold expression of earth and sky, it is approached by no other literature. . . . . Aside from the beauty of the Psalter in poetry and lyric song, which will commend its study as long as culture and taste and letters remain among men, it will be sung until the latest times, wherever man in his loneliness reaches out after the Eternal Being, into Whose nature and relation to His creatures it penetrates deeper than any other book in the world."

Charles Kingsley, Frederick Maurice, and Thomas Hughes, were, when acting in concert and sympathy a third of a century ago, a mighty force in the social and religious circles of England. Their influence is still felt. In "True Words for Brave Men", Charles Kingsley has this to say of David and the Psalms—"This [2 Samuel 22, 1-3] is the death-song of David; the last words of the great man-warrior, statesman, king, poet, prophet, a man of many joys and many sorrows, many virtues and many crimes; but through them all every inch a man—a man, heaped by God with every gift of body, and mind, and heart, and especially with strong and deep intense feeling. Right or wrong he is never hard, never shallow, never light-minded. He is in earnest. Whatever happens to him, for good or evil, goes to his heart and fills his whole soul till it comes out again in song.

"This it is which makes David the Psalmist. This it is which makes the Psalter a text-book still for every soldier and sailor, for all men who have human heart in them. This it is which will make his Psalms live for ever. Because they are full of humanity, of the spirit of man, awakened and enlightened, and ennobled by the Spirit of God. Looking through these Psalms of David, one is struck with astonishment at their variety, at what is called the versatility of his mind, that is, his ability to turn himself to every kind of subject as it comes before him, and to sing of it as man never has sung since. . . . . But the peculiarity of David's Psalms, after all, is from his intense faith in God. God is in all his thoughts. God is near him, guiding him, trying him, educating him, punishing him, sometimes, he thinks for a moment, deserting him. But even then his mind is still full of God. . . . . It is this which has made David for Christians now, as well as for Jews of old, the great master and teacher of heart religion. In the early Church, in the middle ages, as now, [R.] Catholic alike and Protestant, whosoever has feared God and sought after righteousness; whosoever has known and sorrowed over the sinfulness and weakness of his own heart; whosoever has believed that the Lord God was dealing with him as with a son, educating him, chastening him, purifying him, and teaching him by the chances and changes of his mortal life; whosoever, I say, has had any real task of vital, experimental religion—to David's Psalms he has gone, as to a treasure-house, to find there his own feelings, his own doubts, his own joys, his own thoughts of God and His providence reflected as in a glass; everything which he would say said for him already in words which will never be equalled on earth."

Dr. Alexander Maclaren, the gifted preacher and the facile of pen, has this to say in his "The Life of David as Reflected in the Psalms"—"None of the great men of Scripture passed through a course of so many changes; none of them touches human life at so many points. . . . . These quick transitions of fortune, and this wide experience, are the many coloured threads from which the web of his Psalms is woven. . . . . David is like his own harp of many chords, through which the breath of God murmured, drawing forth wailing and rejoicing, the clear ring of triumphant trust, the low plaint of patience, the blended harmonies of all devout emotions. . . . . The Psalms which are attributed to him have, on the whole, a marked similarity of manner. Their characteristics have been well summed up as 'creative originality, predominantly elegiac tone, graceful form and movement, antique but lucid style', to which may be added

the intensity of their devotion, the passion of Divine love that glows in them all."

Speaking of the 18th Psalm, Dr. Maclaren says—"It is one long outpouring of rapturous thankfulness and triumphant adoration, which streams from a full heart in buoyant waves of song. Nowhere else, even in the Psalms—and if not there, certainly nowhere else—is there such a continuous tide of unmingled praise, such magnificence of imagery, such passion of love to the delivering God, such joyous energy of conquering trust. It throbs throughout with the life-blood of devotion. The strong flame, white with its very ardour, quivers with its own intensity as it steadily rises heavenward."

In the "Expositor's Bible" on the Psalms the same author says—"The Psalter may be regarded as the heart's echo to the speech of God, the manifold music of its windswept strings as God's breath sweeps across them."

Perowne, whose work on the Psalms stands second to none of modern works, says—"They are not only—not chiefly, it may be said—the voice of God to man; they are the voice of man to God. They are prayers, indeed, far beyond merely human utterances; they are prayers which the Spirit of God Himself has given as the model of all prayer and intercession; but they bear witness, at the same time, to the reality of the soul's spiritual life in those who uttered them. Truly Divine, they are also truly human. They go infinitely beyond us; they have a depth and height and length and breadth of meaning to which the best of us can never fully attain. We feel that they rise into regions of peaceful and holy communion with God to which we may aspire, but which we have not reached. . . . . They spring from the deep fountains of the human heart; and God in His providence and by His Spirit, has so ordered it that they should be for His Church an everlasting heritage. Hence, they express the sorrows, the joys, the aspirations, the struggles, the victories not of one man, but of all. . . . . No surer proof of their inspiration can be given than this, that they are 'not of an age, but for all time,' that the ripest Christian can use them in the fulness of his Christian manhood, though the words are the words of one who lived centuries before the coming of Christ in the flesh."

Dr. James Robertson, Professor in the University of Glasgow, and one of the very foremost of the leaders among conservative writers on Biblical problems, says in "Poetry and Religion of the Psalms"—"These sacred songs touch our common human nature very closely and at many points. We see here the religious sentiment in actual exercise under all vicissitudes, breathed forth

in humble prayer or grateful praise, impeded in its current by suffering or sorrow, agitated to its depth by temptation, passion, or persecution, or hurried along by exuberant hope and triumphant expectation. And the expression of these varying words of the religious spirit is so simple, the terms are so general and comprehensive, the situations of the poets apparently so unincumbered with local or temporary details, that it is not difficult for a reader at any time to place himself in sympathy with them. As we read the Psalms, we feel that people who had any religion worthy of the name might have been uttering the same things from the beginning, and may go on saying them to the end of the world.

"So it has come about that these old songs of Israel, at whatever times they may have been written, and whatever occasions may have called them forth, have become, in a sense that is true of no other religious compositions, the devotional hand-book of the world. The Psalms have proved how genuine and true their religious tone is by the way in which they have lent themselves to the expression of the finest spiritual experiences."

The late Albert Barnes, the father of the New School party in the Presbyterian Church, expresses himself as follows in his Commentary on the Psalms:—"The Psalms are selected by the Christian from the whole Bible, as they were by the Jew from the books in his possession—the Old Testament, ... nor will there ever be in the world such an advance in religious light, experience, and knowledge, that they will lose their relative place as connected with the exercises of practical piety."

Again he says—"The composition of psalms and hymns is a separate poetic art; and though there are specimens in the hymns . . . . of the highest kind of lyric excellence, yet it is to be admitted that a large portion of that species of literature would scarcely be regarded as even *respectable*, if it related to other subjects than religion. . . . Their [the Hebrews'] poetry of the religious kind . . is all of a high order. There is none that can be placed on the same low level with much that is found in the hymn-books of most denominations of Christians—very good; very pious; very sentimental; very much adapted, as is supposed, to excite the feelings of devotion; but withal so flat, so weak, so unpoetic, that it would not, in a volume of mere poetry, be admitted to a third or fourth rank, if, indeed, it would find a place at all. It is for him who rejects the idea of *inspiration*, as applied to the Book of Psalms, to account for this fact. . . . . To the end of the world the Psalms in religious experience will occupy the same place which they now occupy. To the end of the

world they will impart comfort to the troubled, and peace to the dying, as they have done in the ages that are past."

A. F. Kirkpatrick in "The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges" says:—

"The Psalter then is a collection of religious lyrics. . . . Religious lyric poetry is the expression of those emotions and feelings as they are stirred by the thought of God and directed Godwards.

"This is the common characteristic of the Psalms in all their manifold variety. Some are directly addressed to God, as petition or thanksgiving or praise; some are the communings of the soul with God, expressing its faith, its hope, its love, its needs, its fears, its aspirations, its joys, its triumphs; some celebrate the marvellous works of God in nature and in history; some reflect upon the perplexing problems of life and their relation to the Divine government of the world; but God is, as it were, the sun around which all revolves, and His light and heat illuminate and animate the whole.

"The Psalms stand in an intimate relation to the whole of the Old Testament. They are the inspired response of the human heart to God's revelation of Himself, in Law and History and Prophecy and Philosophy."

"Ian Maclaren", the celebrated writer and preacher, when asked, "Is there a desire for better material of praise to-day?" Replied—"Yes, I think so. There is a tendency to reject trash, which I trust may help to bring the Divine Psalter back to its sacred and rightful place. . . . . You cannot get an ethical hymn like the Fifteenth Psalm."

Dr. A. M. Fairbairn, logician, theologian, and Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, says—"Is there a feature of the Divine character, or a vital experience in the Divine life, that is not to be found in this invaluable portion of the Holy Word?"

Dr. Joseph Parker, minister of the City Temple, London, in his "The People's Bible", speaking of the Psalter, has this to say—"This book alone would afford ample materials for the whole twenty-five volumes which I proposed to issue when I conceived the idea of the People's Bible, so abundant and so rich are its immortal songs. This is emphatically the heart's own book. . . . . It grows in tenderness, its thunders were never so solemn and majestic; its minor strains never so delicate and comforting. Every Psalm bears its own marks of inspiration. Human experience has been anticipated in all its innumerable phases. Is it nothing to have a book which knows the soul through and through, and can express all its sorrow and all its rapture?"

Edward Irving, speaking of David, in his "Essays on the Psalter", says—"Such oceans of feeling did God infuse into his soul, and such utterance of poetry He placed between his lips, and such skilful music He seated in his right hand, in order that he might conceive forms of feeling for all saints and create an everlasting Psalmody, and hand down an organ for expressing the melody of the renewed soul."

Charles L. Marson, in his recent book, "The Psalms at Work," pays this tribute to their worth:—"The melody of the Psalter will be all the sweeter when he hears it harmonized with the music of noble and varied human life. . . . . Perhaps even a handful of instances can help one dimly to understand how enormously this one little book of poems has affected the life of mankind: and that because the Psalmists have reached the common bed-rock of our human natures."

The Rev. Dr. S. G. Green, in "The Book of Psalms", bears this testimony to the permanent value of the Psalter—"The Psalms are adapted to every age and condition of the Church; for whilst they contain many allusions to the circumstances of the former dispensation, in which they originated, they are yet so accordant with the spirit of the later and more glorious economy, that they are still loved, and used with the greatest profit by the most established Christians. To us, as to pious men of old, they are of unspeakable value as a guide and directory to communion with God; affording us Divinely approved examples of acceptable prayer and praise, and utterances of holy thought and feeling suitable to all the vicissitudes of human life. They have gladdened the hearts, elevated the hopes, and strengthened the faith of unnumbered thousands of every land; and will continue to maintain their hold on the sanctified affections of believers till time shall be no more."

The late Dr. W. M. Taylor of Broadway Tabernacle, New York, in his "Life of David", says—"The Psalms of David are the throbbing heart of Holy Scripture."

The late Dr. Charles H. Spurgeon of London, in his monumental work on the Psalms, says—"That I have nothing better to offer upon this peerless book is to me matter of deepest regret."

Henry Ward Beecher once said—"Hymns are good, very good, but in times of trouble and distress we need the Psalms, for we can depend on them."

The late Professor John Forbes, D.D., LL.D., Aberdeen, says in "Studies in the Psalms"—"Of all the books of the Old Testament the one to which we most frequently recur with ever growing interest and delight is the Book of Psalms."

Richard G. Moulton, in "The Modern Reader's Bible",

says—"The Book of Psalms is recognized as the perfection of lyric poetry. It well may be."

Professor Henry Van Dyke of Princeton, and Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, says—

"We should do wisely to consider and appreciate the poetical element in the Psalms. The comfort, help, and guidance that they bring to our spiritual life will not be diminished but increased by a perception of their exquisite form and finish."

Such words of appreciation for the contents and spirit of the Psalter have been uttered by every commentator, special student, and great preacher who have ever written on this Hymn-book of all hymn-books. The quotations made are but a mite of what has been said along the same line. The responsive readings which hold such a prominent place in the services of the Church of England, the Protestant Episcopal Church of America, and the Lutheran Church, and which form a part of the Sabbath worship in some other churches, are taken almost wholly from the Psalter. This is the highest tribute to the permanent value of the Psalter. Excepting only the 14th Chapter of John and the 15th Chapter of 1st Corinthians, the Psalms more than any other portion of the Bible are most frequently used in the sick-room. They are the solace of the suffering, and they furnish the expressions for the hope and the confidence of the dying.

"The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want."

"Goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me."

No single book of Scripture, unless it be the Gospel by John, has ever taken such a hold on the heart of Christendom. No single book of the Bible, except the Gospel by John, has had such an influence in moulding the affections, sustaining the hopes, and purifying the faith of believers. Such is the testimony of all students of these sacred songs.

Will you note the following with reference to these quotations:—

1. They are mostly from men of our own times, men who know and appreciate the literature and the scholarship of these 19th and 20th centuries. Driver, Briggs, James Robertson, Robertson Smith, Alexander Maclaren, "Ian Maclaren," Murray, Joseph Parker, Kingsley, Irving, J. J. Stewart, Perowne, Kirkpatrick, S. G. Green, C. L. Marson, W. M. Taylor, Charles H. Spurgeon, and Henry Van Dyke, are men

who have had, or are now having, close touch with the life and scholarship of our own times.

2. Profound scholars and eloquent preachers and men of literature unite in sounding the praises and the incomparable excellencies of this Hymn-book of all hymn-books. No sooner does one become a student of these Divine songs than he becomes an ardent lover of them, and a willing bard to sing their praises.

3. The opinions exhibited in these quotations are unbiased expressions of the admiration of their authors for these songs of the ages. In no case are they the product of controversy, or of special pleading. Their authors studied the Psalter for personal profit, or in professional work, and were so filled with admiration for the spirit and contents of these Divine odes, for their flow and fire, for their majesty and simplicity, for their warmth and glow, and for their expression of soul-communion with God, that they felt impelled to put in writing their appreciation of the songs of this peerless book. They are not admissions, reluctantly wrung from their authors, as to the superiority of the Psalms: they are the glad tribute of men who, through them, have had sweet communion with God.

4. These tributes to the incomparable worth of the Psalms of the Bible are from men who are, I believe without a single exception, members of Churches in which hymns have wholly or in part supplanted the Psalms in the Service of Praise.

It is hard to understand how men who appreciate the value of the Psalms can submit without a protest to their displacement by hymns of human composition, to the worth of which no such glowing tributes have ever been paid, or could be paid.

I suppose it is in part, at least, because of the tendency we have to fall in with the trend of the times; and it is in part due to the fact that the question of the exclusive use of the Psalms in the Service of Praise in Divine worship has not been brought to their attention with sufficient emphasis.

Surely men who sound the praises of the Psalms, as these do who have been quoted, and, indeed, as all special students of the Psalms do, would not be hard to convince that the Psalms of Divine inspiration should be given the supreme and exclusive place in the Praise Service of the House of God.

May this Convention have large influence in calling the attention of the Churches to the subject of the rightful place of these Psalms in the Praise Services of God's people! May the Church be awakened to see that God's own Songs should have the supreme and exclusive place in the service of God's own ordaining! May she awake to the fact that, as we have no right to substitute any other book for the Bible in the

reading service, so we should not substitute any human book for God's own Praise-book in the Praise Service of His own House!

Letter from Rev. James D. Steele, D.D., New York, U.S.A., read by Rev. Dr. Petticrew, one of the Secretaries:—

"74 West 103rd Street, New York,

"July, 29, 1902.

"To the Belfast Psalmody Conference.

"Dear Fathers and Brethren—At the meeting of the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church held in May in Philadelphia, the undersigned was appointed a Delegate to the Belfast Psalmody Conference. I had hoped that possibly I might be able to attend; but a trip to Ireland will not be possible this summer, much as I should like to visit the old country again and meet the brethren. It is but just to our General Synod, however, to say that we feel a deep interest in the Conference, and the warmest sympathy with its object. Our hope and prayer is, that the meeting may be productive of great good to the cause of an inspired Psalmody in the Church. With Dr. J. C. K. Milligan, the writer was also appointed to present the interests of our Joint Committee on a Uniform Metrical Version of the Psalms. I am glad that Dr. Milligan, who has done such good service on our Committee, is to be with you, and bring this important matter to your attention. We would welcome British co-operation in our important task.

"Praying that the blessing of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit may rest upon all your deliberations,

"Faithfully yours,

"James Dallas Steele.

"P.S.—An unusual press of work since I was asked by Rev. J. W. S. Lowry to write a Paper on 'The Psalms and the Higher Criticism', has prevented my completing the matter in time for the Conference. I regret this; but it need not interfere with the discussion of the theme, should time permit."

THE PSALMS AND THE "HIGHER" CRITICISM.

ADDRESSES.

Rev. Professor Dick, M.A., D.D., Belfast, Ireland, said—I feel a kind of responsibility for this particular subject, inasmuch as it was the first subject assigned to me that I might study it and write a Paper on it. Afterwards, when it was learned that Dr. Steele of New York had agreed to write a Paper on that particular subject, another subject was assigned to me, viz., *The "Imprecatory" Psalms*, on which I wrote the Paper read by me last night. I feel, however, as Dr. Steele's Paper is not forthcoming, that it would be well there should be some statement, at least, coming forth from this Conference with regard to this particular topic. It may be said, perhaps, that the question of the "Higher" Criticism is not quite relevant to the question of the exclusive use of an inspired Psalmody. Well, our Programme Committee thought, although that might be true in a certain sense, that yet on the very lines suggested by our Chairman in his address (which goes far to compensate for the want of Dr. Steele's Paper), there was a connection between the "Higher" Criticism and the question of Psalmody; and the first sentence, perhaps, that I should have written on that subject would have been that the position of the "Higher" Critics is substantially the position taken up by those who urge the claims of uninspired hymns. I would have taken and, I think, maintained, that position, although I do not say that they would go the whole length with the "Higher" Critics, if they only thought of the length to which they were going. But, so far as the Divine authorship of the Psalms is concerned, their position has been almost uniformly the same as that of the "Higher" Critics; that is, that the Psalms are to be dealt with cavalierly, and objected to or rejected, and argued against on the ground of their insufficiency and their lack of Christian teaching, exactly as if they were only human compositions, in order to make way for the hymns. This is the first point I should have tried to maintain.

But with regard to the "Higher" Criticism itself. Dr. Lynd, our Chairman, has pointed out to us that it is a purely naturalistic system, in spite of the fact that a great many men, who are called reverent and Christian men, nevertheless, are borne away on the stream of the "Higher" Criticism. I have no doubt as to the reverence of a great many of those who are now in the stream of the "Higher" Critics, or as to

their desire to be right on the whole, and as to their willingness to seek and find truth; but it seems to me that they are borne away in spite of themselves, just as men are liable to be borne away by any rush of sentiment or feeling in particular periods of the world's history, and that they are borne away insensibly under the impression that the "Higher" Criticism is a profound and well-established science. Well, that is a thing that has yet to be shown; it has still to be proved that it is a science at all. It may, we believe, be shown that it is a thing that, instead of being a science, sets all science at defiance. Nay, more, this has been shown most conclusively by the Rev. John Urquhart for one. A pamphlet has been recently issued by him on this very question—"Is the Higher Criticism a Science?"—and everyone knows who has read any of Urquhart's works that his reasoning is as clear as sunlight. This gentleman, Rev. John Urquhart (a retired Baptist minister, I believe), has done, and is doing, splendid service in his *New Biblical Guide*, in showing that the "Higher" Criticism is not a science, that it is really a system of hypothesis and guesswork practically from beginning to end.

With regard to the Psalms, this "science" asserts itself, and, of course, one may be regarded as an old fogey in denouncing it as not a science. But I intend to show, on scientific grounds, that what I say can be maintained. With regard to the Psalms, the "Higher" Critics will tell us that it is doubtful if a single composition dates back as far as the time of David, and they would tell us too, with their assumption of omniscience, that there was no part of the Scriptures written until the time of Amos, the prophet, and that his book is the first authentic book. Of course that makes a clean sweep of David and the Psalms. It relegates David to the position that has been assigned to him by some Critics, that he was a savage chieftain, and that he never was the writer of any Psalms. In fact, we must postulate a long development of moral ideas, a long rise from Polytheism up to Monotheism; and this height had not been reached in the time of David! These Psalms represent such a vast development that they are far away beyond the region of any moral conception of David's, or of anybody's for hundreds of years after his day.

And they say all this for the flimsiest of all reasons, refusing, without a scintilla of reasoning, to admit that the titles of the Psalms convey any idea at all as to their authorship. The titles, they assume, are all wrong, and they will tell you—and this is the point I wish to deal with now on scientific grounds—that the contents of the Psalms are many a time utterly inconsistent with the titles; and they are willing to take the

51st Psalm as an example of this, in spite of all that the faith of the Church has felt, and the development of Christian life that the Church has derived from this Psalm. David, they say, never composed it. Are there any grounds for their statement? Well, the best way with the "Higher" Critics is to get them to come down to details. They point out in the earlier verses of the Psalm—

"Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned";

and they say that does not describe David's case, for he sinned against Uriah and Bathsheba also. Anyone but a "Higher" Critic who is determined not to see, can see that David is only emphasising his sin against God. Then coming down to the close of the Psalm they find—

"The walls of Thy Jerusalem
Build up of Thy good will";

and that is supposed to refer to a time long after the time of David, and to be the prayer of the captives returning from Babylon. Apparently the "Higher" Critics have the field to themselves here! This verse seems inconsistent with any conception of David's authorship of that Psalm. Now I shall turn to the history of David and see if there be any record that will, in spite of that brilliant guess of the "Higher" Critics, justify the conclusion that David composed the Psalm. In 1st Chronicles 11, 7 and 8, we read that, after taking the stronghold of Zion out of the hand of the Jebusites, "David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called it the city of David. And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about: and Joab repaired the rest of the city." That is, the building and fortifying of walls was actually begun and carried on in David's reign. *There* is the reference to David's fortifying the city round about *in David's history*. Moreover, there is the building of Jerusalem in a spiritual sense. But the "Higher" Critics never come within sight of anything spiritual; and so they will possibly try another guess—one to which I have already alluded—viz., that David is not referred to here at all, or, at any rate, this is a mere myth. This Book of Chronicles is not historic; it is merely a guess made some hundred years before the time of Christ. But we cannot allow them to get rid of the express testimony of Scripture in this way. We require them to show a reason; and that is just the very thing they have not done.

Another passage, in interpreting which the "Higher"

Critics seem to me to show amazing audacity, is the 110th Psalm. And here I am under the necessity of referring to Canon Driver, who is generally regarded as a reverent critic; and I should not like seriously to question his reverence. Take the use that our Lord Jesus Christ makes of that Psalm in the New Testament. It is written—"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand." "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord?" Well, to our mind, that is all plain sailing. There is no difficulty of interpretation there. David unquestionably wrote the Psalm, or he was the inspired penman of that Psalm under the direction of the Holy Ghost, and our Lord recognizes him as such. And yet the "Higher" Critic will tell you, with regard to this Psalm, and Dr. Driver tries to reason himself and us into the belief, that David, in point of fact, did not write it; and he tries, by a jumble that seems to me utterly inexplicable, to show us that, in some way or other, Christ adapted Himself to the conception of the authorship of that Psalm which suited His purpose, and that for the time being it was quite sufficient for His purpose that David was regarded as the author, and He founded His claim to be the Son of David and David's Lord on the Davidic authorship of that Psalm as generally accepted, without committing Himself to that belief; or, He was Himself subject to some limitation, and was not aware of the authorship. Is there reverence here? Turn to the passage, Matt. 22, 41-46. The first remark I have to make here is, that we are trying to settle, on scientific grounds, this particular point. Christ's words are, "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord? . . . . If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son?" "In spirit"—that is, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit; and surely Christ spoke in the same Spirit, having received the Holy Spirit without measure. Christ, then, by the Holy Spirit, says that David, by the Holy Spirit, called Him Lord. And so Christ testifies to the Davidic authorship of the Psalm. It seems to me, therefore, nothing less than irreverence and blasphemy to say that David was *not* the author of that Psalm. If David *in spirit* call Him Lord, how is He, then, his Son? And thus, because these Psalms are declared in the New Testament, on the authority of the same Holy Spirit Who indited them, to be the "word of Christ"—that is to say, Christ knew that the Psalm was His own word, conveying His own truth, from beginning to end, in every letter of it—we conclude that Christ, speaking by the Holy Spirit of a part of His own Word, knew who was the instrument employed by the Holy Spirit in writing it. Will any man, who looks calmly at the facts, stand up and

say that the Lord Christ, the Eternally Faithful and True Witness, bore false witness, or ignorant witness, here? Why, the thought is atrociously blasphemous.

The closing verse of that chapter says, "And no man was able to answer Him a word." No man! But if these "Higher" Critics had been there, they would have answered Him! Did Christ presume on His hearers' ignorance to gain a temporary triumph over them? Will the growing light of any age or of any science confute His teaching? Will the Omniscient Teacher, "in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," ever be convicted either of ignorance, or of playing off a fallacious argument, because His hearers did not know enough to answer Him? No. It is the "Higher" Critics who are ignorant; and they speak with the presumptuous confidence born of ignorance. It would be well for them and their senseless followers if they laboured to know the mind of the Spirit, and to discern spiritual things, with half the earnestness they show in trying to stifle every spiritual conception, and to drive the Holy Spirit out of the firmament of Scripture.

Rev. Dr. Kerr, Glasgow, Scotland, said—It is quite unnecessary to add to the address now given by Professor Dick, but one or two points suggest themselves by his observations. The "Higher" Critics, as a body, do not admit the Davidic authorship of any of the Psalms. Professor Adam Smith's well-known statement is, "Recent criticism has tended to confirm the impossibility of proving any given Psalm in our Psalter to have been by David." This critical conclusion is opposed to the many references in the New Testament which attribute certain Psalms to David. It is opposed to the Apostle in the Hebrews when he writes that God "limiteth a certain day, saying in David", and quotes from Psalm 95; to the Apostle in the Romans, when he writes, "Even as David also describeth the blessedness," &c., and quotes from Psalm 32; and to Peter, when at Pentecost, he quotes from Psalms 2, 16, and 41, and in this form, "The Holy Ghost by the mouth of David;" "David speaketh concerning Him;" and, "Lord, Thou art God, Who by the mouth of David Thy servant hast said." And the position of the Critics is in flat contradiction to the statement of Christ, three times cited in the Gospels, "David himself said by the Holy Ghost," and then He quotes from Psalm 110. So that the contention of the Critics is a defiant contradiction of the infallible Prophet and His Apostles. To the Critics, "the faithful and true Witness" is not a final authority: in ascribing any Psalm to David, He must be a false prophet!

On the supposition that the Old Testament is unreliable and self-contradictory, that "the frame-work of the early chapters is", as Dr. Adam Smith writes, "woven from the raw material of myth and legend," that "the narratives of the patriarchs" contain but "a substratum of personal history", that the historical parts of later times contain errors and contradictions, what value can be attached to the references in the Psalms to Old Testament characters and events? There are several references in the Psalms to Abraham, and over thirty to Jacob. If the history of Moses and Israel, the Red Sea and the wilderness, the manna and the pillar, Jordan and the promised land, be products of the imagination, and at the best partially reliable, of what value is the Psalter as worshippers use it in honour of the Lord? If Moses, Joseph, and David be "human heroes", the character of the Psalms, as the Manual of Praise, is discredited at once, and the whole becomes "strange fire" before the Lord. In the Praise Service of Jehovah all Psalm-singers are telling God of His manifestations and doings toward mythical characters and on imaginary occasions. Such a book of songs should be rejected with shame, and this mockery of the true God cease instantly.

The "Higher" Critics, without exception, plead for the use of uninspired hymns in worship; and generally they endorse the argument that Christ is not to be found in the Psalms. There, again, they place themselves in flat opposition to our Lord. Not alone before His crucifixion, but after His resurrection, He showed that the Psalms contained references to Himself. To the two disciples on the way to Emmaus he spoke of "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow", and "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself". Christ found Himself in the Psalms; the "Higher" Critics and many others do not. But when the authority of Christ is cited in these questions, the reply sometimes is, "Why draw Christ into this controversy?"

Beyond all these and other similar points, the "Higher" Critics deny the inspiration of the Scriptures—the Psalms inclusive—and this causes the exclusion of the Psalter from the sanctuary of God. With one consent, they reject both the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible, as those principles have been hitherto held throughout the Protestant world. If the Psalms are not the product of the infallible Spirit of God as their Author, then they are unworthy of the place given them in the Church of Christ, and should at once be rejected. Their lack of inspiration and their mythical character demand their consignment to the museum of Babylonian and Grecian

"sacred" books, full of legendary characters and mythical occurrences.

PRAISE—Psalm 85, 6-13.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE PSALMS UPON THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.*

By REV. W. J. COLEMAN, D.D., Allegheny, Pa., U.S.A.

The Psalms are the devotional book of the Bible, and they deal with the heart. They give to the heart God's standpoint of thinking and feeling. They tell what thoughts should arise in all the circumstances of life, and what conclusions the heart should draw from all God's doings. The Psalms are emotional and heroic, and turn reflection into praise and feeling into decision. They are God speaking to the heart, that the heart may be guided in speaking to God and in doing His will. In both giving and receiving, the Psalms are the Divinely-inspired medium between God and the spiritual life.

The spiritual life is the inmost thought and feeling of the true Christian—that which decides his quality and destiny. Whatever a man's profession may be, "to be carnally minded is death," but through all difficulties and discouragements and trials, "to be spiritually minded is life and peace." God imparts the spiritual life, for it is a spark of His nature, and He cares for it as the one element in the Christian character that governs and moulds all the rest. He knows what is best for this life, and, as He has purchased it with the blood of His Son, we may be sure that He will provide the best food and the best exercise for it, that it may grow and become strong. The highest exercise of the spiritual life is found in its worship of God, and its best food for this exercise, we believe, is found in the Book of Psalms. God has given both: He has inspired the Book and He imparts the life; and, from its very character, it is natural to conclude that He meant the Book to inspire and feed the life. We cannot believe that the intelligent Christian who sincerely desires life and peace will forsake the Psalms and take to himself in their stead any un-

* Read by Rev John Ramsey, LL.B., Ballymoney, Ireland.

inspired book whatsoever when he seeks communion with God in the service of His praise.

In support of this conviction we suggest the following three considerations, all based on the influence of the constant use of the Psalms upon the spiritual life :—

I. Their influence upon men in leading them to seek the spiritual life. The Psalms tell us of man's evil nature and of the prevalence of sin in human life ; they draw sharply the line between the good and the bad, and lead to meditation upon God's law ; they tell us of the blessing that comes to the good and of the curse that falls on the wicked, and of the throne of God that is set for judgment. A carnally minded man cannot be at peace with the Psalms, and an impenitent sinner will not find them to his taste. They are continually saying to him, "Repent ; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

II. Their influence upon men in leading them to enter into the spiritual life. If the Psalms present clearly and strongly the sinfulness of the human heart, they sing as persuasively the way of reconciliation. Conviction of sin and confession are set before the longing eyes of the repentant one, and the mercy of God, His grace, and His truth, are sung in his ears so that his heart cannot miss the way. Forgiveness and the peace it brings the heart are alluringly set before him. The returning prodigal does not miss the father's welcome in the Psalms.

This consideration and the preceding one belong more particularly to the discussion of "The Psalms in Revivals and Evangelistic Work" ; and so we take for discussion—

III. The influence of the Psalms upon the growth and development of the spiritual life. Those who are born again are babes in Christ, and they need constant care, and food suitable for them. God's care has given the whole Bible, but especially the Psalms, for this purpose, and those who early have learned to love the Songs of the Bible find in them rich spiritual food all their days. As showing how the spiritual life is nourished, we notice—

1. That great familiarity with the Psalms, and their frequent use, bring to the heart a sense of the constant presence of God. The spiritual life thrives in the presence of the Divine Life. Jehovah is the river, near the roots of the soul, from which comes the steady inflow of grace to the heart. If enemies combine, the soul is sheltered under His throne. If they are multiplied that hate us, our salvation cometh from Him alone. The Psalmist sets God before him, and he is not moved. Every Psalm is a reminder of the Divine

Presence. The spiritual life is inspired and built up before Him. The believer sings to God an ascription of praise that in its substance is perfect, and coming as the expression of spiritual life, it pleases Him, and fire comes from Him into the soul to kindle the sacrifice. Life in such communion cannot but be healthy and uplifting. Like Enoch, the man with the Psalms in his heart walks with God; and if he that walketh with wise men will be wise, what shall we not say for the spiritual life that abides in God's presence? The Psalms do not only sing about God—they sing to God. The sublime and uplifting conception of the Psalms is that God is not a God afar off, but a God near at hand, a God of harmony and concord, a God who hears and loves to hear the praise which is at once the highest and the most health-giving exercise of the spiritual life.

2. The Psalms give growth and development to the spirit, in that they lead one to see everything as related to God and as showing forth His praise. The fruitful tree, even unto old age, tells of His grace, the mountains speak of His justice, the ocean of His thought, the clouds of His chariots, the winds of His messengers, the harvests of His bounty, the rain of His mercy, the mother-bird of His care, the home of His shelter, the Church of His dwelling-place. No less do the Psalms show His hand in history. God holds and governs in active, constant supervision and activity all that comes to pass. Men are acting freely, but He is moving powerfully; and the spiritual mind sees what He is doing, and blesses Him that nothing is left to chance or to the power of evil. All things praise Him, even the wrath of His enemies. The deep lifts up its voice to Him, the trees of the field clap their hands, and the earth rejoices. As the Psalms are for the praise of God, they lead the spiritual mind to look on everything as related to Him and giving cause for adoration. Naturally they take that view of all things and events, and the spiritual life grows with that teaching; it feeds on all it sees, for there is an element in everything that, under the teaching of the Psalms, affords reason and matter of praise. Worship is the highest and most congenial exercise of the spiritual life, and under the influence of the Psalms as an interpreter of the things seen, this life develops its powers harmoniously and to the highest degree.

3. The Psalms aid the spiritual life by showing the working of the heart under God's dealings with it. How we should feel under God's dealings with us—how we should pray and what resolves we should reach—this is set before us in these Songs of praise; and, therefore, they give both direction and power to the spiritual life. The rest of the Bible tells us more

particularly of outward actions; the Psalms tell us how the heart feels, and therefore in the growth of heart-life they come home with peculiar fitness to its needs. Have others been tried with our troubles? The Bible says, Yes. How did they feel under this dealing? We turn to the Psalms, and they tell us how the saints felt and what they said to God. In straits, in weakness, in the depths, in darkness, in doubts, in fears, in death, they show us the way to God and to praise. We learn how others have mourned under conviction of sin, how they have prayed when surrounded by foes, how they have murmured at the prosperity of the wicked; and we learn from them the way to peace and to praise. The Psalms are the Great Physician's book of cases, and they show the method of treatment that, when closely followed, will bring cure to every disease of the soul. Nay, more, they show that all things come primarily from God and must be intended for our health and strength, and so they take the bitterness out of life and reveal the sweetness at the bottom of every cup. The spiritual life should grow out of its weakness and throw off its diseases when it gives itself to such wholesome treatment.

4. The constant use of the Psalms uplifts the spiritual life by inspiring a hopeful and cheerful disposition through trust in God. Many of the Psalms begin with a note of trouble and of unsatisfied need, but nearly all end with satisfaction and an assurance of comfort. This is peculiarly true of Psalms that deal with personal experience. Songs that begin with an overflowing cup do not always answer our need; but those that begin where we are, and end where we should be and wish to be, are the strength of our spiritual life, and they comfort us in all our affliction. Singing brings cheer even when we begin in a minor key, and the minor often betokens a deeper cheerfulness at the end, because our confidence is in a power that has raised us from the depths. He who begins on the top and remains there may be superficial and have a disquieting suspicion that he is not on a sure foundation, but that is not so with one who rises to comfort out of a deep experience of sins forgiven and of burdens made light. "Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise." And we would add, Does any wish to be cheerful? Let him also praise God in the Psalms, that carry us, with the strength of Him Who made them, out of the darkness of our doubts and fears into the light of His face.

5. The Psalms enrich the spiritual life by a knowledge of that in the character of God for which especially He is to be praised. The Psalms being inspired by God and being intended for His praise, show us the attributes of God in the

right view and in the right proportions to excite and sustain the highest worship. One who has worshipped God in the use of this inspired Book will not need to change his view of God when he reaches heaven and joins in the song of praise which is there continually offered to the Lord of all. It is not at all likely that uninspired men will manufacture uninspired songs to praise Him there, or that they will have enough human confidence left to want to do so. When they come to sing the song that no man on earth can learn, let alone make, they will be humble enough to take God at His own estimate of Himself, and have no thought of bettering it. After the day of judgment they will have no tendency to leave the justice of God out of view, as is done in almost all uninspired hymns. When they see His indescribable glory they will have no desire to sing about themselves. They will realize that no man knoweth God but the Spirit of God, and they will be willing to take the Spirit of God at His word, and hold that word as the substance of His praise. God's power, His presence, His changeless nature, His eternal being—all these are celebrated in the Psalms and put in contrast with the opposite attributes in His creatures. But these do not receive the attention that is given to His goodness, which is set before us in constant repetition that our faith and our praises may be made strong as we realize what His mercy means to us. His faithfulness in keeping His promises, and His justice executed upon the heathen and on apostates, stand out clearly as the column of strength around which His dealings with men revolve. His holiness, the supreme and central object of our praise, pervades all His doings and brings deepest reverence into all His worship. Here is the place where, more than all others, we need the Psalms, for here is where the human spirit fails and where the Holy Spirit alone can be relied on to take the things of God and show them unto us. Here the spiritual life of the believer rises to the knowledge of God, which is eternal life.

6. The use of the Psalms in worship tends to bring the spiritual life into the likeness of God. We grow into the likeness of that which we worship. The Psalmist says, concerning idols, "They that make them shall be like unto them." The principle is the same in its effect upon those who worship the true God: man grows to be like what he worships. Those who truly and sincerely worship God in the inspired Psalms grow to be like the God described in the Psalms, and those who sincerely worship the God described in the uninspired hymns grow to be like the God described in the hymns. The subject which we discuss, therefore, is of supreme importance to the spiritual life, for it concerns its

likeness to God. All true progress in human life, all sanctification, all holiness of heart, consist in growing into the likeness of God; and the question forces itself on our attention, Do the inspired Psalms and the uninspired hymns set forth the same God in all His attributes, and these in the same proportion and with the same manifestations? or do they differ in some or in all these respects? and, if so, which should we take as the one that being used in worship will bring our spiritual life into the true likeness of God? If, for instance, the attribute of justice is made prominent in the Psalms, we would expect the sense of Divine justice to be strong in Psalm-singers; and if the attribute of justice appear but little in the uninspired hymns, we would expect that the apprehension of Divine justice would be weak in hymn-singers. This, again, when it had run its course, we would expect to appear in views of the atonement which is the satisfaction offered to Divine justice by our Saviour. Those with the strong sense of Divine justice would believe in the real satisfaction made by Christ for our sins, while those with the weak sense of Divine justice would believe in the governmental or moral influence theory of the atonement. In reaching this effect the uninspired matter of praise is not charged directly with presenting error, but with failing to present the attributes of God in due proportion as they are presented in the Psalms. We submit that, in preparing a hymnary for the worship of God, men have entered on a work far beyond their powers to do as it should be done, and that, therefore, we should all return to what the Spirit of infinite wisdom has given to us. The spiritual life of the believer demands this, for he must grow into the likeness of that which he worships, and he cannot afford to use any other than the true presentation of God in all His attributes, in their proper proportion and true manifestations.

7. The Psalms influence the spiritual life to grow in love for all good people, for the Church and kingdom of the Messiah. One who worships God in the Psalms will have his delight in the saints that are on the earth. The Church of which glorious things are spoken will have a high place in his heart, and he will feel that all his springs are found in her courts. The kingdom of the Redeemer which ruleth all, which reacheth to the ends of the earth, and which shall at last include all peoples and nations, is the hope of his heart. He will look forward to the time when all lands shall sing to the Lord, and will work for this end with hope in his heart. The Psalms set before us broad views of what is to be done on the earth, and they give a correspondingly broad conception to the heart of what we should attempt to do in the name of the Lord. The spiritual life of no man can be narrow who

broadens his desires according to the predictions and promises of the Psalms. Though written in a narrow age, they are broad enough for the millennium. Our spiritual life will grow great as we try to enter into the greatness of God's purposes revealed in the Psalms.

The following *Telegram* from Ministers of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland was read by Rev. Dr. Petticrew, one of the Secretaries :—

"To Chairman, Conference for Psalms, Belfast.

"The undersigned Ministers of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, in name of the said Church, regret that their Church is not represented at the Conference, but wish to express their cordial sympathy with the object of the meeting, and their prayer that a rich, Divine blessing may rest upon the Conference.

"Donald MacFarlane, Raasay.
"John R. MacKay, Inverness.
"Alex. MacRae, Portree.
"Ewen MacQueen, Harris."

Reply Telegram was as follows :—

"Warmest thanks from Psalm-singers' Conference to Ministers of Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland for their cordial expression of sympathy."

PSALM-SINGERS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

By REV. JAMES KERR, D.D., Glasgow, Scotland.

From the Psalms break forth continually the sound of the trumpet and the alarm of war. The one God Whom the Psalms ever magnify is often represented as clad in military majesty. In one Psalm, which is an appeal to Him for the deliverance of the Church from oppression, He is addressed

several times as O God of Hosts, and, O Lord God of Hosts. In another He is represented as a horseman riding forth in awe-imparting splendour to rescue those compassed by the floods of ungodly men and the sorrows of hell. He rides on a cherub and His career is on the wings of the wind.

> On cherub and on cherubim,
> Full royally He rode;
> And, on the wings of mighty winds,
> Came flying all abroad.

From His nostrils issues smoke; the coals are coals of flame: darkness is His pavilion; His voice peals forth thunder: lightning flashes from Him as He charges on the ranks of the foe; and earthquakes attend the prancings of His horse of war. Thus He obtains a signal victory, and lifts the rescued into power and majesty like His own.

The heroic deeds of this Man of War, the Psalms celebrate again and again. As a mighty Redeemer, He overcomes in these lower dominions the invisible hosts of His people's enemies. Like the King of Salem, He strikes through kings in the day of His wrath, leaves in His path of conquest multitudes of dead, satisfies his thirst at the running brooklet and lifts up His head in triumph. He ascends to heaven as an illustrious Conqueror after a successful campaign, and is followed by the captives He has taken in His battles. The chariots of God are twenty thousand.

> God's cherub chariots, myriad-fold,
> Come flaming from afar:
> And, as on Sinai, God is there,
> As in a victor's car.
> Thou hast ascended, armed with gifts,
> And captive captor led.

Surrounded by angels in countless numbers and brilliant array, He sweeps onward and upward through the open gates of Jerusalem the Golden. Those first-born sons of God sing His triumphal song, as the voice of many waters and the noise of mighty thunderings.

> "Ye gates, lift up your heads on high;
> Ye doors that last for aye,
> Be lifted up, that so the King
> Of glory enter may.

But who of glory is the King?
The mighty Lord is this;
Ev'n that same Lord, Who great in might,
And strong in battle is."

In His works this Lord of Providence has been marching through the world with an high and outstretched hand. He wounded the leviathan of Egypt and gave his carcase to be meat to those that passed through the wilderness. He marshals hosts of His auxiliaries—regiments of parasites in millions—and directs them in their desolating charge like the heaviest cavalry in a thundering avalanche against Pharaoh and his people and land. He rebuked the sea and the waters fled.

"O sea, why fled'st thou? Jordan, back
Why wast thou driven so?"

He slew Og of Bashan and Sihon of the Amorites, for His mercy endureth for ever. He scattered the host of Sisera which fell at Endor. The swarming myriads of the Assyrians melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.

"When Thy rebuke, O Jacob's God,
Had forth against them past,
Their horses and their chariots both
Were in a dead sleep cast."

And so, as the Psalms portray Him, this God of battles marches on in His career of devastation and blood with His sword on His thigh and His arrows in His hand, till the final issue when His enemies shall lick the dust and this God of gods and Lord of lords receive the homage of a conquered world—the Conqueror and the conquered uniting together in victorious song.

And why all this? Why is God, even the God of infinite compassion and love, become a warrior carrying devastation and disaster far and wide? Because there has been rebellion among His subjects, intense in spirit and universal in extent. Because His right over man, His creature, and over the earth, His province, has been challenged, disputed, repudiated; and humanity has risen in revolt to dethrone their Monarch—the blessed and only Potentate. The second Psalm echoes forth the first blast of the trumpet as earth mobilizes its forces, in league with the forces of hell, against heaven—

"Let us asunder break their bands,
And cast their cords from us."

Humanity below against God above! And the Lord of Hosts must crush the rebellion in all the varied forms in which its dragon-spirit has incarnated itself. Emmanuel must recover earth and place it again at the feet of El Shaddai. He must assert the claims of the Monarch universal, though there be skirmishes and battles innumerable in the celestial campaign, with an awful Armageddon at the close, with blood to the bridles of the horses. The leader of the tumultous throng of the insurgents must be seized and thrust into the bottomless pit, chained. "There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven."

The singers of the Psalms, therefore, become soldiers. They become like Him whose glories they celebrate in their songs. They catch inspiration from His own martial excellencies. They espouse His cause. Liberated themselves, they become freemen-warriors under that Captain of Salvation to Whom they owe their liberation; and an army of men freed from the slavery of sin and superstition is one of the best of armies. They have faith in their Redeemer-Leader; they march under Him, confident of the coming victory, for their Captain never lost a battle and never lost a man. He is their buckler, helmet, shield, high tower. He teaches their hands to war and their fingers to fight. They fight against all within them that would interfere with their unreserved loyalty to their Commander-in-Chief. They say like Amasai, chief of the captains, when "there came of the children of Benjamin and Judah to the hold unto David", "Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse." Though hosts encamp against them they are fearless.

"For He in His pavilion shall
Me hide in evil days;
In secret of His tent me hide,
And on a rock me raise."

By their songs of battle, they are taught courage, endurance, enterprise, boldness, heroism, and are fitted to use weapons both spiritual and carnal in bringing down the strongholds of all combinations and conspiracies that dispute the progress of Him Who goes forth at the head of them. They are strengthened with strength in their soul. They break bows of steel

in pieces. A thousand and ten thousand fall at their right hand. And they resolve never to surrender or end the campaign till their glorious Lord be enthroned over a redeemed humanity,

> "When people and the kingdoms do
> Assemble all to praise the Lord."

These songs have prepared heroes for the struggles that have marked the pathway of the sacramental host of the people of God throughout history. They have been sung as the hosts of the ungodly rushed on to the slaughter; sung as the battle thickened; sung in the moment of victory. They were sung in the catacombs and arena in Rome amid the persecutions of Julian the Apostate—and apostates are ever the fiercest persecutors—and other rulers of that Pagan empire. They were sung in the torture-chambers and dungeons of the Inquisition; sung on their mountains and valleys by the Waldenses; sung in the Smithfields of London; sung in the fires of St. Andrews; sung in the glens and moors of Lanark, Ayr, and Dumfries shires; sung in the ships carrying the outlawed and exiled who were banished from their native land; sung in all conditions in face of the despotisms of earth in their heartless efforts to blot out the name and people of the Saviour from the world. They were sung by the Lollards of the Netherlands; by the Huguenots of France; by the Waldenses of Switzerland; by the Puritans of England; by the Covenanters of Scotland; and by the Pilgrim Fathers as they sailed on the *Mayflower*, landed on the shores of the new world, and took possession of that great land for Christ. To the extent to which the sacred Psalter spread throughout Europe, to that extent the Reformation prospered; the cause of the emancipation of mind and conscience from the shackles of superstition succeeded, and free nations sprang into existence and power—Germany, Austria, Bohemia, Poland, Switzerland, France, Holland, and these Isles of the Seas.

The Protestants of the mountain ranges of the Cevennes were called "Camisards", a term of reproach like "Mountain men", in later times; and one of them records the effect of the singing of the Psalms:—"We flew when we heard the sounds of the Psalms, we flew as if with wings. We felt within an animating ardour, a transporting desire. However weary we might be, we thought no more of our fatigue and grew light as soon as the Psalms reached our ears."

Psalms 24, 68, and 118, were the battle songs of the

Huguenots. The last was sung by them on bended knees at Coutras. "See," cried one of the enemy, "See, the cowards are already begging mercy!" "No," said one of his company, "you may expect a stern fight from the men who sing Psalms and pray." The Huguenots were sent to prison in thousands; they were beaten and tortured, not accepting deliverance; they were condemned to the galleys; they were banished to far-off lands; they were thrown into the company of the vilest criminals; but still they sang the Psalms of David. Three hundred of them perished in the flames of Bellot singing the Psalms; and on the bloody day of Bartholomew thousands passed into God's presence where are fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore. "The effect of the Psalms on the character of the Huguenots," writes Lelievre, the Frenchman, "was wonderful. The Psalms nourished the moral life of a race of men such as the world will perhaps never see again." And he adds, "We need to-day a generation nourished on this *marrow of lions*. If we may judge by its weaknesses, our age uses little of this food. It seems to seek its moral aliment in any place rather than where it was found by the heroic singers of the Psalms."

When the Turks with the fiery sword of their Mohammedanism had swarmed over the Hellespont and were devastating Europe, they were confronted at Vienna by Sobieski, King of Poland, and an army of Psalm-singing heroes. The siege was raised and the flood of this invasion —Daniel's "Abomination that maketh desolate"—stemmed and driven back never to return. The little army of the royal freeman sang Psalm 115—

"Not unto us, Lord, not to us,
But do Thou glory take
Unto Thy name, ev'n for Thy truth,
And for Thy mercy's sake."

There was indescribable enthusiasm when they came to the words—

"O wherefore should the heathen say,
Where is their God now gone?
But our God in the heavens is,
What pleas'd Him He hath done."

In the great Continental Reformation, whose central scenes were in Germany, Luther and his fellow-reformers were nourished on this "marrow". That "solitary monk who shook

the world", delighted in those Psalms he designated "Psalmi Paulini" (32nd, 51st, 130th), because they are so full of the doctrine of justification by faith through the sovereign grace emphasised by Paul—that doctrine which carried the day against popes and cardinals. And from such Psalms as the 46th, Luther brought fearlessness and power in his conflict with Pope and Popery fortressed by the Vatican, the symbol then of temporal ascendancy throughout Europe. Nourished by such Psalms, Lelievre's "marrow of lions", this "swan of Eisleben" became a lion: the lion roared and Rome quaked.

How large has been the contribution of the Psalms to the Reformation from Geneva—the capital of European reform—under John Calvin. The doctrinal system designated by his name was the battering ram which shattered the Arminianism which is the very basis of the superstitions and corruptions which the man-will despotism of Rome embodies and asserts. Original sin, predestination, particular atonement, efficacious grace, final perseverance—given men grasping these truths and—better—grasped by these truths, and they are men who are indomitable and must conquer. Because of this, the Reformers met and scattered all obstacles, like chaff before the wind. Predestinated men, men elected of God to a heavenly mission! stand out of their way, give them a clear passage, or submit to be ground into shivers; "as I also have received of My Father." These men are like "the saints" of Havelock at Cawnpore, like "the Ironsides" of Cromwell at Dunbar. One of them can chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.

And what shall be said of the Reformers and Confessors of covenanted Caledonia? Of the achievements of the Psalm-singers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? Long before their day, indeed, the Psalms were sung in the early dawn of Christianity on these northern Isles. In the sixth century Columba was a diligent student of the Psalms—Columba who stands "among the stormy Hebrides, like one of their lonely light-houses, upheld by a mighty arm of rock, to cast a ruddier gleam over the waters, and draw it back again into the dark night." And so was Sir William Wallace, of patriotic and immortal renown, who gazed on the Psalter as he suffered at Smithfield. The men who were raised up to deliver Scotland and the world from the delusion of the Divine right of kings, and hurl the despots from the throne who claimed and embodied it, were Psalm-singers—Knox, Melville, Henderson, Rutherford, Gillespie, Cargill, Cameron, and their bright-robed followers in the great prolonged battle for liberty civil and religious—all were Psalm-singers. Of our Scottish covenanted Israel, these were the chariots and horsemen.

These were not milksop courtiers to kings: witness Andrew Melville. They were not sycophants to queens: John Knox. They quailed not before Lord High Commissioners: Alexander Henderson. They feared not to excommunicate tyrants though on thrones and palaces: Donald Cargill. And they boldly issued declarations proclaiming the forfeiture of their crowns by despots, as did Cameron and his co-patriots. Drastic measures must be adopted to defeat the adversaries who usurped the rights of the Lord and His Anointed. All Scotland must be carried for the King—King Jesus. And the Psalms nourished these heroes for their herculean task. They sang them in the day time and in the night; they sang them in the conventicle and on the battlefield; in the glens by rocks o'er-canopied; on the heath-clad moors; in the lonely caves; on the scaffold; at the stake; and when the waters flowed over them as their murderers feasted on the scene.

> Tyrants! could not misfortune teach,
> That man had rights beyond your reach;
> Thought ye the torture and the stake,
> Could that intrepid spirit break,
> Which even in woman's breast withstood
> The fury both of fire and flood?

And these Psalms will have a place in the battles this world must yet see ere the principles of true freedom be universally established. They themselves lead the mind onward to the golden age of righteousness and peace; "through fearful works in answer to prayer," all evil, though entrenched on earth for thousands of years, shall be flung off with the crash of a judgment, and Christ's crown flourish on His head. At the commencement of that period when the witnesses shall have a resurrection—if not before—they shall inquire for suitable battle songs. They shall inquire for the songs that nerved their ancestors in the battles of the past; for those that told of the overthrow of the Pharaohs of Egypt and the Sennacheribs of Assyria; for those that were sung at the shattering of Armadas and the banishing of the Stuart tyrants; for those that cheered and emboldened the witnesses of the past, as they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and loved not their lives unto the death. These risen witnesses shall say to the substitutes for those inspired weapons of warfare, as David when Saul's armour, helmet of brass, and coat of mail were offered him, "I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them." And they will say of the Psalms which have proved powerful in smiting the

Goliaths of the past as David said in after years of the sword by which he cut off Goliath's head, and when entering on a new and difficult task, "There is none like that; give it me." And thus they shall march forward to victory under the standard of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. And when the warfare is over and the victory won, they shall unite together in the old song, ever new—

"Now blessed be the Lord our God,
The God of Israel,
For He alone doth wondrous works
In glory that excel.
And blessed be His glorious name
To all Eternity:
The whole earth let His glory fill.
Amen, so let it be."

PRAISE—Psalm 124 (2nd version). BENEDICTION.

FRIDAY, 8th AUGUST.

FORENOON MEETING, from 10 to 1 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN :—

REV. PROFESSOR H. S. ATCHISON, Albia, Iowa, U.S.A.

PRAISE—Psalm 72, 8-11.

Rev. Robert Fleming Stuart, Stranraer, Scotland, led in prayer.

Chairman's Address :—

Fathers and Brethren, representing as I do one of the very small branches of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in order not to be considered inconsistent I ought to occupy only a very small portion of your time in my introductory remarks this morning, and I shall keep this particularly before me, because the hour is late, and a great deal lies before us to be accomplished to-day. Though sometimes we, that is, the small division of the Church with which I am identified, are peculiarly conservative, we are not so conservative or exclusive as to refuse to identify ourselves with a movement in favour of the Divine Manual of Praise. That the Psalms are in no sense sectarian is certainly true; but the hymns are sectarian, as we heard yesterday—all hymns of different denominations, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and others. Sectarianism can be no more charged upon the Book of Psalms than it can be upon the Bible itself. It is a part of the Bible; therefore it is as broad as the Bible; and being particularly comprehensive, it has been represented as a compendium of the whole Word of God. There is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism". The

fact is, the matter of Praise in the Church of Christ is very closely affiliated with the faith of the Church; and it is not only affiliated but it is identified with it. We have heard it said that error has been sung into the Church by the use of human compositions in the Praise of God; but we maintain that no such charge can be made against the Book of Psalms. Error cannot be sung into the Church by the exclusive use of the Divine Songs. Then they are certainly safe. And another thought that I wish to present, and about the only one at this time, is that it is believed generally, among all Calvanistic Churches at least, that the ordinances of God are never effective unless they are accompanied by the Spirit of God. Efficiency is only to be expected when the Spirit of God is poured out with the dispensation of the ordinance. The Apostle Paul has said, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." It matters not what forces of logic the preacher possesses, or what powers of rhetoric or eloquence, he can give no efficiency to the ordinance which he dispenses. Now we have no promise nor assurance that God will bless and make effective any institution which He has not appointed; and, therefore, we have no promise that He will bless the dispensation of the Ordinance of Praise when we introduce into it human compositions—something altogether unauthorized by the Spirit of God, as we have been taught during this Conference. The Divine Songs being authorized, we have good ground for the faith that these Psalms will be accompanied with the Spirit of God making them effectual. The Church of God exists for two great ends. One of these is to preserve the truth: she is the custodian of Divine truth. Another is to promulgate that truth, and make converts to it and develop them, and, through her influence and the use of the means which God has appointed, to prepare them for a glorious state. The Word of God, which includes the Psalms, is exactly adapted to accomplish this; and we are assured that the change is wrought in the beginning by the Word of God. The Apostle James says, "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures."

We have no reason to believe that an individual is "born again" or regenerated by prayer: it is by the Word of truth that this change is wrought, and therefore the Word of God is the instrument which the Spirit of God employs in carrying on that work, maturing and developing the individual until he becomes fit to be raised to the congregation of the redeemed and all the glorious hosts above. Now, it seems from this, if all these thoughts be well founded, that the Word of God in the Psalms presents unto us the Divine truth in a kind of

condensed form, and they are well adapted both for missionary work and for the upbuilding of the people of God in the Divine life.

THE PSALMS IN REVIVALS AND EVANGELISTIC WORK.*

By REV. F. M. FOSTER, Ph.D., New York, U.S.A.

If the Psalms will not do for revivals and evangelistic work, they should be cast out. If they do not in revivals and evangelistic work head the list, if they are not, for these purposes, as superior as God's Word is superior to man's, let them go!

The subject assigned requires a Scriptural view of revivals and of evangelistic work. These two are not the same, though the terms are, at times, used interchangeably.

I. *The Psalms in Revivals.*—The meaning of a revival is, "the act of being revived; a restoration to life; a recovery as from languor or depression; renewed activity; special interest in, and attention to, religious services, duties, and the subject of personal salvation; to bring to life after apparent death; to revive one's spirit, courage, heart." Definitions, taken from standard authorities, show that revivals contemplate the quickening of a discouraged, languid, dead Church. Among the seven of the Apocalypse, the Church of Sardis seems to fall within the description—"Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead. Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." God's call to the Church of Sardis was for a revival of religion, "for recovery from languor and depression," "for special attention to services, and duties, and personal salvation," "to bring to life after apparent death." *This is a revival.*

A genuine revival is the gracious work of the Holy Spirit. There are revivals and revivals. Some are produced by the magnetism of the speaker, by working on the emotions, by incorrect views of God, of Christ, of sin, of death, of hell, by some heresy which leads to fanaticism. A true revival is the work of God. It comes down, instead of being "worked up". It produces conviction of sin, sincere repentance and confession, longing for forgiveness, purified heart, endeavour after new obedience. It contemplates a soul, a church, seeking God according to the terms of the Covenant of Grace.

* Read by Rev. James Kerr, D.D., Glasgow, Scotland.

These two questions may be proposed—(1) Can the Psalms be used in this work? (2) Are the Psalms better than all else for this work?

As to the first, that the Psalms can be used in revivals, will not be denied. Churches which use hymns will admit this. If hymns had not been at hand, if they had not been written, if they had not been introduced into the Church, the use of the Psalms in revivals had been cordially accepted. The Church knew practically nothing of anything but Psalms in worship through all the Old Testament history, and through all the New Testament history, barring the last few hundred years. Hymns were not used authoritately in any of the Reformed Churches until about 1765. They were not used to any considerable extent until within the memory of men now living.

This being an accepted fact, let it be observed that some of the most remarkable revivals the Church has ever seen were in Old Testament times. When Israel came up out of the sea, they sang an inspired song. When God delivered David and his men from the hand of Saul, their discouraged hearts were revived in the words of the 18th Psalm. In the revivals under Asa, Jehoshaphat, Josiah, and other kings, the Psalms were used. As all Israel gathered at Jerusalem for the feast, they were revived, encouraged, lifted up, as they went "from strength to strength", singing the Songs of Zion. These feasts were revivals; and the Psalms were used, and the Psalms only.

A true revival must have a Scriptural and complete view of God. The Psalms give that view. The hymns do not. A true revival must be based upon a scriptural and complete view of Christ. The Psalms give that view. The hymns do not. A true revival must be based upon a correct view of the law. The Psalms give that view. The hymns do not. A true revival is based upon a correct view of sin, its polluting power, how it is abhorred of God, and punished in awful judgments. The Psalms give that view. The hymns do not. A true revival is based upon a correct eschatology—a Scriptural view of death, the resurrection, immortality, the end of the world, final judgment, and the future state. The Psalms give that view. The hymns, in not a few instances, give a misleading, distorted, unscriptural view. A revival will be deep, lasting, mighty, in proportion as it rests upon the Divine Word. All revivals, of which there is record in the Bible, were Psalm-singing revivals; and these were not in a synagogue, hidden away in some village or mountain hamlet. They were not confined to some city, or to a few cities. But

they were national, and embraced the thousands of Israel in all their tribes. Nothing like them has been seen in New Testament times. In these, in all these, the Psalms and the Psalms only, were used. Will one say, will one dare to say, they were insufficient? Grapes do not grow on thorns, nor figs on thistles. The mighty results—a great nation weeping, supplicating, beseeching God to pardon in His great mercy; razing idol temples, and destroying their priests; separating from defiling relations with the heathen; setting up the worship of the true God in its purity; and renewing covenants—these are not superficial results, but results which show a deep, thorough-going revival.

A great revival took place in Babylon. For many long years God bore with Judah. "The Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending; because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling-place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy." The Scriptures go on to describe the awful judgments which were then visited upon Judah. The recital closes with these significant words, "And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon." The remnant of this mighty people, with their beautiful country and their magnificent cities in desolation, with torn flesh, with bleeding feet, with streaming tears, with breaking hearts, toil on to Babylon. Once there, a revival of religion takes place, posssibly not right away, but certainly very soon. And what is the vehicle of praise? The Songs of Zion! As deep called unto deep, as waves and billows passed over them, they turned to those old, inspired Songs. The pathos of the scene is touching. They wept when they remembered Zion! They hanged their harps on the willows by the rivers of Babylon. To add to their grief, their captors, for their own delectation, demanded that they sing these famous old Songs. In distress, they answered, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." Here is a genuine revival. There is nothing superficial about it. It has the marks of genuine worth. It goes down into the very soul.

Now, bear in mind, in this revival the Psalms, and the Psalms only, were used. And this is the kind of revival for which the Psalms were written. A superficial, evanescent revival has not reached the boundaries of, much less entered into, these deep things of God. Hymns, like superficial

revivals, are a mixture of orthodoxy and heterodoxy, and wholly fail to express the experiences of a soul under deep conviction of sin, under the wrath of God and impending judgments, and God's beseeching love and forgiveness set forth with Divine certainty.

A reformation is practically a revival in the Church. In the Reformation in Scotland the Psalms, and the Psalms only, were used. It was a revival national in its boundaries, and it established a whole people in the truth. No superficial songs would do. Hymns will not sustain a people as they pass through the throes of reformation when these are accompanied by prolonged persecution. Sentimental songs will not give relief or strength. As they faced the rack, the stake, the dungeon, as they gathered in conventicles to worship, as they fled for life amid the moss-hags, and over moor and mountain, nothing would sustain but the pure, unadulterated, inspired Psalms. And they sang—

> "God is our refuge and our strength,
> In straits a present aid;
> Therefore, although the earth remove,
> We will not be afraid."

Such inspired song lifts up, strengthens, gives peace of soul.

A Temperance Revival, called "The Woman's Crusade", occurred in the States about twenty-seven years ago. The women would meet for prayer, beseeching God for help. In one city, at least, when the feeling, the desire, the longing, for Divine assistance and interposition was exceeding great, the use of hymns, with which the meetings had commenced, was discontinued, and the Psalms were used in their stead, emphasizing this—when the revival goes deep enough, nothing short of God's Songs will satisfy! The conclusion is irresistible, viz., when a backsliding, a fallen, a dead Church experiences the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit, she finds the Psalms not only suitable, but necessary, to express her emotions, her desires, her longings, her praise, necessary to cover her new and blessed experience, necessary to express her worship of that God Who forgives sins and restores to His people the joy of salvation.

II. *The Psalms in Evangelistic Work.*—But what is the status of the Psalms in evangelistic work? Are they suitable for this? Are they better for this than hymns? Here, again, a correct understanding of the nature of the work proposed is necessary. The word means, "to instruct in the Gospel," "to convert to Christianity," "to proclaim the Gospel." An evangelist

is one who goes from place to place holding services, with a view of reaching the unchurched and the unsaved. The work really includes all missionary effort; for the commandment of the Head of the Church is, to go and evangelize all nations.

Once again we say, If the Psalms be not suitable for the work of evangelization, the Church has just ground for complaint, for God commands her to perform a work for which she is not suitably equipped. Can we make this accusation against God? All who introduce hymns do thus accuse God! Are they justified? When we displace the Psalms, used for nearly 3,000 years, saying, "The hymns are better," we sit in judgment on the work of the Head of the Church, condemning it as insufficient, faulty, not so good as man's. If we say that the Psalms can be improved upon in the work of evangelization, we condemn God.

But, be it observed, the Psalms have been used in the greatest evangelistic work the world has ever seen. Not since the history of the Church began has there been such mighty work in reaching men with the glad tidings of salvation, done so effectively, as during the time of the Apostles. They literally went everywhere preaching, evangelizing, organizing churches. In some cases whole towns were brought under the power of the truth; in some, whole provinces. In nearly every case the devil was full of wrath, and kindled the fire of persecution. The work was tried, whether it was wood, hay, stubble, or genuine gold. Each stone was tested, and cemented with tears, if not with blood. The tremendous power of these mighty evangelizing works does not suffer by comparison with similar efforts at the present day. Indeed, the present is scarcely worthy to be compared with what was done in the first, second, and third centuries.

And yet! and yet!! in all this mighty work, the old Psalms, at which people of this generation look with suspicion, were the vehicle of praise! The ransomed of the Lord returned and came to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, and their joy was voiced in the songs of "the sweet Psalmist of Israel". Nothing else was used. The Church worshipped God with the Psalms. The converts worshipped God with the Psalms; and like the Psalms, they were strong, noble, God-like. It did not occur to them that the Psalms were insufficient. The evangelizing work was mighty. Kings stopped and considered. Some thought to crush it out by mighty armies and by savage ferocity. But Julian, the last of the heathen emperors, and himself an apostate, drew the arrow which pierced his breast, and hurled it up toward heaven, answering, "The Nazarene has conquered!" Evangelistic work, with the Psalms as the medium of praise, has

exhibited the grandest courage, the most persistent effort, the greatest fidelity, the most glorious results.

The great evangelistic work done in the Apostolic Church was repeated, in part, in the Reformation in Scotland. The Reformation was practically evangelistic work, as it spread through the Three Kingdoms. It was so intense, so powerful, that the Three Kingdoms entered into a Solemn League and Covenant to faithfully serve God, His truth, the interests of souls. The world looked on in wonder. In all this work, which was truly evangelistic, the Psalms, and the Psalms only, were used.

May not these three propositions be accepted—

1. If the Psalms are not suitable for the work of evangelization, God is at fault for not having sooner led the Church to prepare hymns.

2. But God has given a profound demonstration of the suitableness of the Psalms for this work in the first three centuries.

3. God has given a second demonstration, but less remarkable, in the evangelization of the Three Kingdoms.

Now, what has served the Church in such glorious and successful evangelization, may not be lightly cast aside as insufficient, even by the Church in the enlightened times in which we live. And yet she has presumed to do so; and she has so criticised God's Songs that some ministers and members, in Psalm-singing Churches, have fallen under the heresy that you cannot do evangelistic work with the Psalms. It is remarkable how we can become befogged on the plainest evidence which Church history can produce. But the fact is unmistakable.

The wrong conclusion arises, in part, from a misconception of what true evangelistic work is. There may be, there often is, superficial work done by the pastor. But this cannot be compared with the superficial work done by popular evangelists. The coming of some of these is a calamity. They have no proper conception of the truth of God. Their message consists largely in exhortation which frequently dissolves into platitudes. Great effort is made to get the popular ear. The meetings are attractive, much as is an amusement hall. Once the meetings close, congregations are about as small as they were before. We do not hesitate to say that much of the so-called evangelistic work of the present day is a travesty on the evangelism of Bible record. God providentially withdraws the Psalms from such associations. You could not keep them in such setting. One or other must give way. Then, there is a popular misconception of the part which praise should have in evangelistic services, based on

a wrong view of the purpose and object of worship. It is customary to "round up" the best singers in a village or town when an evangelist begins services. This he insists upon. In not a few instances, Psalm-singers are "rounded up" into hymn-singing choirs. No inconsiderable part of the service is given over to singing. And the songs sung are not the better class of hymns, but light sentimental songs of the gushing type, and which live about one year, and are then cast over to the rubbish heap. It was Sankey, if our information is correct, who made popular the notion that you can sing the Gospel into men's hearts; and now, all over, you have evangelists attempting to sing men into the Kingdom! Then all are called upon to sing. "Let all sing"! is the loud exhortation. The wicked and unregenerate are pressed into service, and they are made, on this theory, converting instrumentalities! Let it be admitted that some effect is produced. But it is of the anodyne character. It soothes, it charms, but that it converts is yet to be proved. Christ was the Prince of evangelists. There is no record that He went about singing the Gospel. The Apostles went everywhere evangelizing. There is no record that they attempted to soothe men by singing the Gospel. History does not record any great evangelistic work with this characteristic. Indeed, it rests upon a fallacy, if not a great heresy.

There is a striking contrast between the Psalms and the hymns. The former were written by the Spirit of inspiration, and they are for, and professedly for, the saints. They are Songs of Salvation. Their experiences are not such as the world can enter into. Their hopes are foreign to people out of Christ. God gave these Songs for His people to sing, as they "go from strength to strength". The evangelist's view is, Get men to sing and they will repent. God's view is, Repent and you will sing. The one is man's wisdom. The other is Divine. There is no force at man's disposal that will enable him to cause an assembly of unregenerate men to sing the Psalms—that is, for any length of time. They will not do it. Nor could they do it acceptably. "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldst take My covenant in thy mouth?" (Psalm 50, 16). Their whole life and desires are foreign to sentiments in the Psalms. "And they sung as it were a new song . . . and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth" (Revelation 14, 3). The unregenerate cannot honestly sing, "O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise unto the rock of our salvation", "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion", "To-day

if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart", "Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest".

No; unregenerate men assembled will not sing these words. The incongruity is so manifest, so patent to all, that the Psalms are cast out and hymns are introduced. The theory upon which the matter proceeds is extra-scriptural, if not positively unscriptural. It is not sanctioned by Scriptural precept, or by Scriptural example. The character of the Psalms argues against it. That it is producing superficial results, so much so that "evangelistic services" are passing, need not be emphasized.

What is needed in this day is a genuine revival, and genuine evangelistic work. Neither of these can be produced with hymns. Superficial, unscriptural methods will produce superficial, unscriptural results. We hold that the introduction of hymns is largely responsible for the deadness in the Church. She has sung, "I want to be an angel, and with the angels sing," until she has lost power with God! Nor will a genuine revival come; nor will there be an awakened interest in true evangelistic work, until hymns, which usurp the place in worship, are cast out, and the Lord's Songs become the glory of His people, Israel. How eloquently the interests of souls appeal to God's people to be obedient to this His commandment, and to use in His worship that, and that only, which He has ordained, viz., the Songs of Zion!

DISCUSSION.

Rev. Gawin Douglas, Loughbrickland, Ireland, said—Mr. Chairman, it was once said of an American minister who visited this country, that he was a good listener. Now, Mr. Chairman, I am a good listener; and in connection with an organization of this kind, where I find men better able to speak than myself, I am quite pleased to keep my seat. However, in connection with the present Papers there is one idea which, I think, has not been referred to hitherto in this Conference, to which I wish just for a moment to call attention. On the first day of our meetings you will remember that our friend, Dr. Petticrew, in that magnificent Paper of his, established the true theory of all worship, and demolished the opinion of the prohibition theory. But, sir, there is an-

other theory of worship to which I would wish for a moment to call attention. It is a very plausible theory, and oftentimes one which catches hold of good ladies and even sentimental gentlemen—the theory of those who argue for hymns in the worship of God from the principle of expediency and experience. They will tell you, for example, that they have found their hearts cheered and their affections enlivened by hymns of human composition, and hence they plead for their introduction into the worship of God. Some few years ago a noted evangelist was holding meetings in this city, and one morning a lady coming out from one of the meetings accosted a Belfast minister in this language:—"Oh, sir, wasn't that heavenly?" "What do you mean, ma'am?" said he. "Oh, sir," said she, "it was that hymn, 'The angels, the angels, the angels.'" "Why, ma'am," said he, "I suppose you really thought you were an angel." Well, again, there are others, and they will tell you that they have found their hearts morally better, and their affections elevated, by the organ and the harmonium, and hence they plead for their introduction into the worship of God. And again, there are others, and they will direct you to "Lay Preachers" as eminently blessed in the conviction and conversion of sinners and the revival of religion, and they will plead for the abandonment of pulpit exclusiveness, and making the minister's throne free and open to all. Now, Mr. Chairman, I am not ignorant that solemn feelings and pleasant emotions may be produced by all these means and many others, but are we on this account to adopt them? Why, Mr. Chairman, on this plea we might justify bowing to the East and curtseying to the West, and all the man-millinery of Ritualism—yea, we might justify all the rites and ceremonies of the great apostasy. Well, Mr. Chairman, we have good reason to fear that solemn and excited or comfortable feelings in God's worship, which are not produced by a service in harmony with the Word of God, are not the work of the Spirit of God in the heart; and when the exciting cause is taken away, we fear these feelings will, like the baseless fabric of a vision, vanish and be gone for ever. But be this as it may, God's Word is our only guide in His worship; and it is only when we follow its teaching that we may hope to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Now, Mr. Chairman and Christian friends, I affirm, on the authority of the Holy Word of God, that never since the commencement of the world's history has the Spirit of God blessed error or corruption in His worship to the conviction and the conversion of sinners, to the edification of believers, or to the revival of pure and undefiled religion. The

Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and He never bears false witness.

PRAISE—Psalm 51, 7-13.

THE PSALMS AND MISSION WORK.*

By REV. THOMAS M'CAGUE, D.D., Omaha, Nebraska, U.S.A.

Having had a small part in the beginning of the American Mission in Egypt, why should I hesitate to speak a word for the honour and glory of our common Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

In adhering closely, and even tenaciously, to the literal interpretation and use of the inspired Word, we lose nothing, but rather gain much in every way.

In Egypt the distinguishing mark between us, the missionaries and those who have joined with us, and the native Christians, is that we are Bible Christians; while they, the Coptic Christians, are merely nominal. They see us reading the Bible, expounding it, and striving to conform our lives and practice to its precepts. They see us praising our God through the use of the Word, the inspired Psalms. In all our services they cannot but see a difference in song, in preaching and in practice, in the sanctuary, in the family, and in the private life; so that they give expression to what they both see and feel by the term, "Bible Christians," in contradistinction to the deadness and formality of their own mode of worship and life.

There is one redeeming feature, and it is quite encouraging to those of us who are called to labour among these nominal Christians, and I may say also the Muslims as well—tradition has handed down through the dark ages and generations of the past a profound regard for the Bible, and especially so for the Book of Psalms; so that they are by no means entire strangers to the Scriptures and what they ought to practice in their worship and lives.

And now, when they have learned from a few manuscripts handed down, some of the precious truths of the Scriptures, shall we who are called and sent to be their teachers in Divine

* Read by Rev. Professor Dick, M.A., D.D., Belfast, Ireland.

things introduce our departures from the revealed Word? Now that they are having the Bible freely circulated and taught all over the land, is it good, is it right, for us to encourage the introduction of a distracting element, the tendency of which is to lead them away from the Word? Shall we who are called to be teachers of the Word teach our own thoughts instead of God's thoughts, when it is written, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts"? (Isa. 55, 8 and 9.)

We were glad to see how carefully they watched us, and guarded the very words of the holy Scriptures, lest we should introduce some doctrines and practices in our worship that were contrary to their own traditionary teachings of the sacredness of the very words of Divine inspiration. It held us down to the One Book. For instance: In our Communion service we sometimes gave thanks only once for the bread and wine, as we do in America. The native Christians (Copts) asked, "How is this? We call you Bible Christians, and yet you do not conform in practice to what the Lord taught in the institution. He gave thanks first for the bread, and after they had all eaten, He in like manner gave thanks for the wine, and gave to all. You are not, therefore, strictly Bible Christians." What could we say? Was not truth on their side?

When Christ came the first time in the flesh, He swept away many of the traditions and practices of the elders, Scribes, and Pharisees, as chaff before the wind; and when He shall come the second time without sin unto salvation, He will sweep away everything that is perishable and that can be shaken, "that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. . . . For our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12, 27 and 29).

We who are missionaries rejoice to testify to the faithfulness of the Christian converts to the Psalms, and indeed to the whole Word of God. While labouring among them, in the beginning of our mission in that interesting field of Egypt, it delighted my soul to witness the natives bringing their large Arabic Bibles with them, and eagerly seeking every announcement of the texts of Scripture to find out what God had to say to them in His Word.

Our desire and prayer to God is, that as the Lord has "smitten" Egypt, He may now "heal" it, according to His promise (Isa. 19, 18-25). "Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance." We want nothing preached there but the Bible. We want

nothing there in praise to our God but the inspired Psalms. We want nothing in practice and life but what our God approves in His Word.

It is and has been the desire and aim of the missionaries in Egypt to have a people come out of the old corrupt Coptic Church, and from the Muslim delusion, by thorough regeneration and evangelization, instead of a mere outward reformation. To this end we labour, pray, and teach, so that when our Lord comes He may have a people prepared to receive Him at His appearing. We are persuaded, and heartily believe, that when He comes there will be a vast amount of rubbish that will be consumed, not only in these nominal Christian Churches in foreign lands, together with all corrupt and deluded assemblies, but also among our ourselves, who claim to be the true representatives of the Lord's Church in Apostolic times, and who have our missionaries in many lands teaching the way of life to a lost world.

I say this not with reference to the Praise Service in our worship only, but in many other things in our worship, walk, and life. We now "walk by faith, not by sight". We now "see through a glass, darkly"; but when He comes we shall see "face to face". "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3, 2).

But how much we come short is seen in the address to the seven churches (Rev., 2nd and 3rd chapters). But the Judgment Day will make all things clear and plain at "His appearing and His kingdom". The hay, wood, and stubble will be consumed; only the persons and things that are genuine will be saved—"yet so as by fire."

In the Judgment Day the Psalms will be in use still. They are the Scriptures of eternal truth, and "cannot be shaken". They are adapted to all ages and generations. There are many of them Messianic, many of them *of mercy*, and many of them of judgment.

Therefore we will, by the grace of God, adhere to the use of the inspired Psalms, as we will to the entire Bible, until the end come. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." The night will soon be past: the day is at hand. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

THE PSALMS IN THE EGYPTIAN MISSION OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA.*

By REV. WILLIAM HARVEY, D.D., Cairo, Egypt.

In the year 1854 the Rev. Thomas M'Cague and wife were sent by the Synod of the Associate Reformed Church of North America to begin work in Alexandria, Egypt. They were soon joined by the Rev. Gulian Lansing and wife and Miss S. B. Dales, all from the missions in Damascus, which at that time were supported by the Irish Presbyterian Church and by the Associate Reformed Church of North America. Since 1821 the American Board of Foreign Missions had been doing mission work in Northern Syria, with their principal station at Beirut. They had prepared for their use a book of praise, in the Arabic language, which contained a selection of hymns and of the Psalms in metre. Among the latter were the 1st, 23rd, 46th, 48th, 51st, 72nd, 100th, etc.

They were used by the mission in Egypt for several years as the best they could obtain at that time. But as these selections formed a small part of the Psalter, efforts were made to provide a better and more complete book of praise. Correspondence on this subject was carried on between the missionaries of the Reformed Presbyterian mission of Northern Syria, and of the Damascus and Egyptian missions. Selections of the Psalms were re-made, versified, and arranged into metre. These were referred to the three missions interested. After the criticisms and suggestions were considered and approved, these selections were printed in Egypt for the use of the Churches.

Soon after this a Syrian, possessed of poetical talent and skill in versifying and transposing prose into poetry, was found by the missionaries in Latikieh. He was engaged to put the whole Book of Psalms into verse with various metres. At first he spent the time he could spare from his business on the work, in his home in Latikieh, under the supervision of the missionaries there. In this way he versified a number of Psalms; but as they had to be sent to Egypt for the criticisms and suggestions of the missionaries, much time was lost, and this way of doing the work was unsatisfactory. It was, therefore, arranged to have the poet go to Egypt, and complete the work there, where the book was first to be printed.

The rule, according to which the metrical version was made, was, a correct translation of the thought of the Hebrew and

* Read by Rev. James Henry, Cahans, Monaghan, Ireland.

of the prose translation in the Arabic. And in order to better secure this, the poet read his manuscript copy in the hearing of two missionaries, one comparing it with the Hebrew, and the other with the Arabic translation. The poet remained in Egypt until he had completed the work, which was so well done, that it has served its purpose until the present time, without material change.

Editions of the Psalms in Arabic.—The first edition of the whole book was printed on the mission press in Alexandria in 1875. This edition was soon exhausted, and three others were printed on the Beirut press and circulated in Egypt and Northern Syria. One of these editions had both the ordinary and the Tonic Sol-Fa music notation, another had the Sol-Fa music only, and the third was a small pocket edition without music, and without all the vowel points. The next was an edition of 5000 copies, printed in Cairo, with the vowel points, but without music notation. In 1896 another edition of 5000 copies was published. It had one version only of any Psalm, with the Sol-Fa music notation. A new edition of 5000 is now being printed. It will be a cheap edition of convenient size, without music, and will probably sell for twenty-five cents per copy.

The preparation of the Psalter, its printing and distribution having been solely done by the mission, has facilitated its general and exclusive use in the churches.

After the defection of two of our native pastors to the tenets of the Plymouth Brethren, hymns were introduced into some of our stations, and were used by some of the people. But their use was local, and limited chiefly to persons inclined to the sect to which reference has been made.

Our own native ministers and elders are loyal to the principle of using Inspired Psalmody only in the worship of God, and the people regard it as a duty to sing in the church, although in so doing their untrained voices sometimes produce discord. A serious obstacle in the way of the greater popularity of the Psalms is the inability of the natives to sing correctly, and the lack of musical talent among the missionaries for teaching music.

However, as a number of native tunes have been introduced, and the children of our schools are being taught to sing, great improvement may be expected in the future in this important part of Divine worship.

It may be worthy of notice that selections from the Psalms in Arabic are memorized by the priests of the Coptic Church, and these are repeated by them as part of the public services in connection with the Liturgy in the Coptic language. And it has been customary for the past generation of Copts to

commit certain Psalms to memory, and repeat them as prayers, especially in the early morning. This may be one reason for the more ready acceptance of the use of the Psalms in worship by the members of our Church in Egypt. And it is not improbable that the prominent place the Psalms have had in the Coptic Church, was a means of preparing some to receive the Gospel as preached by the American missionaries, who used only the Psalms of inspiration in the worship of God. However this may be, it will be evident from the following statistics that the blessing of God has accompanied the labours of the missionaries and the native helpers in the land of the Nile.

Membership	6,580
Organized Congregations	53
„ „ Self-supporting	5
Other Stations	173
Ordained Native Ministers	30
Licentiates	20
Presbyteries	4
Synod	1
Contributions by Natives for definitely religious purposes, 1901	$29790.00
Tuition Fees paid by Natives... ...	$29637.00

There is a Protestant community of upwards of 25,200 scattered over the country from Alexandria to Assouan.

Two years ago a new mission was opened in the Sudan. At the present time there are two missionaries and their wives, who are beginning work on the White Nile, near Tewfikieh. A native preacher has been preaching the Gospel for about two years in Omdurman and Khartoum, and in all the meetings held by him and the missionaries, the Songs of Zion were sung, where a few years ago the chanting of the Koran and the groaning of the Soudanese, under the tyranical misrule of the Mahdi Ahmed, were heard.

We hope the day is not far distant when the vast regions of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan will be open to the preacher of the Gospel, as he bears the Divine message of salvation to Moslem and Pagan alike; and when many of all the tribes of Ethiopia will sing in their own tongue the Lord's Songs in such words as the following:—

"His large and great dominion shall
From sea to sea extend:
It from the river shall reach forth
To earth's remotest end.

They in the wilderness that dwell
Bow down before Him must;
And they that are His enemies
Shall lick the very dust."

THE PSALMS AND MISSION WORK.*

By REV. JAMES MARTIN, M.A., M.D., Antioch, Syria.

There are, I am aware, those who represent that the Psalms do not, as regards the matter of the Church's praise, meet the requirements of the mission field, and who claim that there is advantage from the use in Divine worship in the mission work of uninspired hymns.

From all such representations I very decidedly dissent.

I entered upon foreign mission work with the firm conviction, based upon my understanding of the Holy Scriptures, that there is no authority for singing in Divine worship anything but the Divinely-inspired and Divinely-appointed Psalmody; and all my experience these more than thirty years in the mission field has only confirmed me in this persuasion.

When I began mission service, such words on this subject as those I had seen quoted from Romaine seemed to me worthy to be written in characters of gold; and they express my matured views of to-day and as a missionary, namely, his words, well known to members of this Psalm-Singers' Conference, (I quote from the work of the late Rev. Wm. Somerville, on Psalmody): "I want a name for that man who should pretend that he could make better hymns than the Holy Ghost. His collection is large enough; it wants no addition. It is as perfect as its Author, and not capable of any improvement. Why, in such a case, would any man in the world take it into his head to sit down and write hymns for the use of the Church? It is just the same as if he were to write a new Bible, not only better than the old, but so much better that the old may be thrown aside. What a blasphemous attempt!"

In this Paper on "The Psalms and Mission Work", which I have the honour to write for The Presbyterian Psalm-

* Read by Rev. Professor Dick, M.A., D.D., Belfast, Ireland.

Singers' Conference at Belfast, I would, firstly, declare our fundamental principle which, as a principle granted on both sides, we would ask our hymn-singer friends and brethren to keep in mind, namely, that it is not our experience but the Word of God which is the rule to direct us how we should worship Him; and then, secondly, I would examine, as regards "The Psalms and Mission Work", the testimonies of experience, comparing the fruits of Psalm-singing and of hymn-singing.

I. *It is not our experience but the Word of God which is the Rule to direct us how we should worship Him.*

This I premise in view of representations above referred to —the opinions of some as to what is in practice found advantageous.

Will-worship is not acceptable to God, no matter how appropriate, in the judgment of many men, may seem any particular form thereof. The worship and ordinances which we should receive and observe are such only as God hath appointed in His Word. The Holy Scriptures are the only rule to direct us how we may glorify God.

It is, moreover, certain that the true ordinance will have the best fruits, and that, therefore, a full survey of results from experience will prove its Divine right.

As against those who assert that the Psalms, as contrasted with uninspired hymns, do not, on practical trial, establish our Scripture-founded claim for them, we are prepared to give answer, comparing the fruits, and showing that, in experience, the Psalms indicate their sole right as Divinely conferred.

From experience the proofs are clear and demonstrative.

But we, the Psalm-singers, had not to wait for all these proofs, to which each generation adds. We knew that that which was Divinely-appointed in the Holy Scriptures was that which God would honour and bless.

In dissenting from certain representations as above-mentioned, we dissent, therefore, first of all from the principle generally associated with them, viz., the false principle which would make experience, and not the Word of God, to be the rule and the test on the question. And now,

II. I proceed *to examine, as regards "The Psalms and Mission Work", the testimonies of experience, comparing the fruits of Psalm-singing and of hymn-singing.*

1. Here, firstly, I shall, I believe, establish the claim that *with the exclusive use of the Psalms in praise have been ever associated the most eminent Missionary enterprise and the truest Mission work.*

The earliest Christian centuries, when only the Psalms were sung by Christians in Divine worship, were the most

distinguished of all for missionary zeal. Passing to the latter half of the fourth century, we find that Chrysostom of this city of Antioch, whose charming words respecting the custom, as then prevalent, of singing the Psalms of David in the Christian families and Christian assemblies, will doubtless be admiringly quoted till the end of time, was one of the most eminent of that age for missionary spirit; that he left among his orations a remarkable missionary speech, in which, in language characteristically beautiful, he gloried in the spread of the Gospel in his day, announcing that it had reached even to the far-off British Isles; and we find that by him were established new missions in Phœnicia, Cilicia, and Persia, as well as among the Goths. I would quote, as follows, some of Chrysostom's words:—"The grace of the Holy Ghost hath so ordered it that the Psalms of David should be recited and sung night and day. In the church vigils—in the morning—at funeral solemnities—the first, the midst, and the last is David. In private houses, where virgins spin . . . in the deserts, where men converse with God—the first, the midst, and the last is David. In the night when men sleep He wakes them up to sing, and collecting the servants of God into angelic groups, turns earth into heaven, and of men makes angels, chanting David's Psalms."

If, next, we come to the Reformation in Europe, which, as to much of its history, may be described as a great missionary movement, its purest and highest developments, namely, in the Calvinistic Churches of France, French Switzerland, and Scotland, were, we find, associated with the singing of the Psalms, and the Psalms alone, in the worship of God. And, as to the present day, in the first rank in mission work, both in most liberal support and in widest extension, the Psalm-singing Churches stand most conspicuous; while to the same effect is the evidence I have from the character of the actual mission work—the best missionary work in foreign mission fields known to me, as witnessed by its fruits, has been that done by missionaries of Psalm-singing Churches.

Conversely, as to hymn-singing, may it not, in view of all the evidence from ancient and modern times, be summarily said, that the history of the use of uninspired hymns in the worship of God has associated with it, throughout, a history of relaxation as to doctrine—that is, a history of heresy? But heresy is, of course, always antagonistic to true mission work.

The council which met in this city of Antioch about the year A.D. 269 and gave judgment against Paul of Samosata, blaming him as having discontinued the use of the Psalms and introduced hymns, condemned him at the same time also for Arian heresy.

The writers of that admirable book, "The True Psalmody," prove, I think, conclusively, that the first hymn-writers, and first hymn-singers, were, as to doctrine, heretics.

Coming again to our own day, and to speak especially from my personal knowledge and experience, there is, among missions more or less known to me, one, which, having, I am assured, some forty years ago sung the Psalms alone in the Service of Praise, has, for many years past, used uninspired hymns; and the mission referred to has declined, and that more and more, from the Evangelical and Protestant doctrine and testimony that formerly characterized it. Doubtless that mission, in its change as to Psalmody and as to doctrine, followed the home Churches represented by it, and simply reflects the character of those home Churches. And this would illustrate the extent of the evil influence of such departures by Churches in Christian lands. These departures are immediately reproduced in their mission fields, even until missions once Protestant, giving up every protest or testimony against anything whatever, are in danger of losing all title to the name either of Protestant or of Christian.

Some of those in the home Churches who, by a hymnology, first promoted departures, may, in debate, have demanded of their Psalm-singer brethren that they "cease controversy about so small a matter in order that the attention of the Church be given to matters of real and great importance, such as mission work."

It was, in fact, these speakers themselves who first treated the innovation of hymns as not "a small" but a great matter, and who were responsible for all the controversy. But it is more especially my purpose to notice that they, while professing superior zeal for missions, were, by their innovation, actually attacking the foundations of true Christian mission work.

Some four years ago the promoters of a Conference of Christian Workers, to be held at Brummana, Mount Lebanon —the leaders among them being Presbyterian missionaries— having sent me an invitation to attend the Conference, I replied, mentioning that, as was known, we could not, as Psalm-singers, join in singing hymns in worship, and expressing the hope that the Conference would receive me on common ground, namely, with the arrangement that the Psalms alone, in which we all could unite, should be used in the Praise Services in the Conference. The Conference Committee, however, would not make this provision, and consequently I withdrew my name as excluded. One sentence of their secretary's letter of reply to me had the words, "The singing of appropriate hymns will prove such a bond of union;"

and another sentence was as follows : " On such an occasion it is important to avoid bringing up any matter about which there has been or remains any traditional controversy among the Churches."

But what happened ? One of the speakers, a Presbyterian minister and missionary, delivered at the Conference—which embraced representatives of many missions—an address, afterwards printed in their authorized and published report, in which he strongly deprecated the use by missionaries or other Christian workers of such expressions about the Papacy as though it were Antichrist, or which would deny to it anything of Christianity but the name, or which would speak of its doctrines as " vanities".

To exemplify what he meant, the speaker selected for especial attack some books of Mr. Mikhail Meshâka, a native Syrian, a convert from Romanism, who had written very ably and, as I consider, very usefully against Popery. Mr. Meshâka was dead ; and he was a man whom it was much easier to attack dead than alive. But I must quote a paragraph, at least, from this Conference speech as published :—

" The last obstacle I shall mention is that method of attack exemplified by some of Mikhail Meshâka's books. Let us examine one briefly. The expression *Popish Vanities* in the title is offensive to those for whom the book is intended. The verses quoted on the first page, ' The rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed ' (in Arabic, ' His Christ '), would brand that Church as Antichrist. The second passage on the same page is no better : ' They encourage themselves in an evil matter ; they commune of laying snares privily—they say, Who shall see them ? They search out iniquities ; they accomplish a diligent search.' His preface denies to this Church anything but the name of Christianity, and accuses his hearers of ' lies ', ' heathen worship ', ' pagan practices ', ' idolatry ', &c."

This un-Protestant harangue appears to have passed without any dissent, for it is published in the authorized report. But, had Psalm-singers been admitted by the Conference on common ground, as required by that Christian charity which I gladly acknowledge to have often experienced from not a few of those who do not hold with us on the question, it is certain that such a speech would have been met with distinct protest, and it would never have disfigured the published report of the Conference. As it was, the Conference, uncharitably refusing our conditions, had hymn-singing, and with it, though representing so many missions, it accepted such a speech as that I have just quoted from.

2. And now I come to my second subdivision here, which is,

that *the Book of Psalms is especially fitted to prepare missionaries for their work, and to be earliest used by them in the mission work.* To have committed the Psalms to memory again and again, according to ancient Christian custom, and to have heard the Psalms expounded in order, Sabbath by Sabbath—both of which privileges are enjoyed by the young in the denomination to which I belong, as they most probably are also in the other Psalm-singing denominations and congregations—are among the very best preparations for missionary work.

At my first taking up my residence here in Antioch—a field of hard rock, as I was truly told—I found much comfort, as I well remember, in repeating to myself the 114th Psalm, which concludes thus:—

> "Who from the hard and stony rock
> Did standing water bring;
> And by His pow'r did turn the flint
> Into a water spring."

Would the missionary, in beginning his work, select the book of Scripture which, more than any of the rest, has the character of a compendium of the whole, he finds in the Book of Psalms, as Athanasius and, after him, Luther, called it, an "Epitome of the Bible". Is he, at the outset, demonstrating the Divine inspiration of the Bible, its perfection and sufficiency—which is, even now, often my first work on arriving at a station on a missionary tour, and especially since the "Higher" Criticism entered Syria—not only will the Psalms supply him with many most suitable proof-texts, but it will be very advantageous to invite attention to the Book of Psalms as a sample of the Bible. Is the minister of the Word in the foreign field, as everywhere, called to preach Christ crucified—the Psalms are full of Christ. They largely speak of His person and of His work, of His sufferings and of His glory.

I need not, here, enter upon that exercise, so very inviting in this connection, of shewing at large the comprehensive character of the Psalms "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness", and as a guide to life eternal through the knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ Whom He hath sent. This will be done in others of the Conference Papers. But I would, to that purpose, offer a few observations based on missionary experience. In my mission work I have repeatedly gone through the Westminster Assembly's Catechisms, Larger and Shorter, following,

in a series of discourses, the succession of subjects adopted in those Catechisms, and including in the discourses the matter of the Catechisms. Concerning the Larger Catechism, I find a favourite author expresses the view that it is by far the best text-book of theology in the English language. But, of all the subjects treated of in those Catechisms, I cannot recall one for which a text may not, readily, be found in the Book of Psalms. Invited, last year, to preach a special sermon to Jews, and remembering the example set in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where are quoted so many Psalms, I selected as my text the words, from Psalm 45th, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

The missionary, in discharging, as a witness for Christ, the unpopular and now much deprecated duty of bearing testimony against error, will find authority and example abundant in the Psalms. Thus—

"Be wise now therefore, O ye kings . . . serve the Lord . . . kiss the Son. . . ." (Psalm 2, 10-12.)

"O ye sons of men, how long . . . will ye love vanity, and seek after falsehood?" (Psalm 4, 2.)

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." (Psalm 60, 4.)

"Confounded be all they that serve graven images." (Psalm 97, 7.)

"I hate every false way." (Psalm 119, 128.)

"Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man." (Psalm 146, 3.)

Meeting, recently, on a missionary tour, with Plymouthist doctrines, and finding it necessary to refute them and give warnings against them, I made special use of the Psalms.

In witnessing against the Latin and Greek Antichrists, which are in great force in Syria, I am often quoting Psalm 110: "The Lord said . . . Sit Thou at My right hand. . . . Thou art a Priest for ever . . ."

When sore persecutions befell this mission and its converts, we, in the special meetings then held by us for prayer, turned very often to the Psalms. In a list of forty-eight chapters of Scripture which, in whole or in part, we, in those days, read, or oftenest read, with special reference to the persecutions, I find thirty-three Psalms.

When teaching the duty of covenanting—of personal covenanting and of public covenanting—how fuil the material found in the Psalms!

3. My third subdivision would be, that *in the mission field*

experience proves there is for hymns, there, as little need as there is warrant, and that the Psalms amply meet all requirements of mission work. In all my missionary life, the Psalms have proved themselves suitable and sufficient for every occasion, every circumstance, and every experience.

May I mention that in the American Reformed Presbyterian mission at Latakia—where I was as a missionary first located—when, perhaps, a young missionary lately arrived was feeling a little homesick, or was deploring the sadly corrupt condition of the people of the land, the beloved father of the mission, Rev. Dr. Beattie, smiling kindly, would repeat, from Psalm 120—

"Woe's me that I in Mesech am
A sojourner so long;
That I in tabernacles dwell
To Kedar that belong;"

which Psalm has also the line—

"From lying lips, and guileful tongue,
O Lord, my soul set free."

And when, in a great thunderstorm, a young missionary would remark on the terribleness of the Syrian lightnings and thunders, the same senior missionary would quote from Psalm 29—

"God's voice divides the flames of fire;
The desert it doth shake:
The Lord doth make the wilderness
Of Kadesh all to quake."

Psalms are daily learnt by heart and sung by the pupils in our mission schools. I can hear the families of our congregation here singing Psalms in their homes. For the school and the family, for pastoral visitation, and for the sanctuary, the Psalms have always amply sufficed us. And, oh, how specially desired and dear, and how fully satisfying, they have proved to the sick, and, above all, to the dying!

Although our Psalm-singing mission stations in Syria and Cilicia have, as neighbours, at no great distance, stations of hymn-singing missions, I do not recollect that any of our people ever even suggested the introduction of a hymn or ever hinted at any need of one. But I have repeatedly, after preaching in pulpits of hymn-singing congregations, had ad-

dressed to me, by members of the congregations, expressions of pleasure at my practice of singing only the Psalms.

The smaller work on Psalmody, written by the late Rev. Dr. Dodds, later a missionary in Syria (see Appendix E in "The True Psalmody"), has been published by his son, Rev. R. J. Dodds, of the Tarsus Reformed Presbyterian Mission, in an Arabic translation, and it is much admired by our native brethren.

4. Fourthly, and lastly, I mention that *the Book of Psalms is found especially adapted to inspire and to promote, in the Church, a missionary spirit.* When that great missionary, Rev. Dr. Duff, being, in 1839, appointed to preside at the ordination of a new missionary to India, delivered his remarkable discourse of that occasion, he selected his text from the Book of Psalms. The words, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us; that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations"—these and the words that follow in that 67th Psalm Dr. Duff found most suitable for his purpose of arousing the Church to a full sense of missionary duty, under this New Testament dispensation, and of stirring her to the ardent Christian missionary spirit in which she shall disciple all nations.

And how many are the other Psalms that could be quoted in the same sense! As Psalm 2, 8, "Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance;" Psalm 22, 27, "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord;" and Psalms 51, 13, and 65, 5.

And I am reminded that, when on one of my furloughs, I gave a missionary statement in the church of the late Rev. Dr. Nevin in Londonderry, Ireland, that very distinguished writer on "The Matter of the Church's Praise", occupying the chair, delivered a most effective and impressive missionary address founded on a Psalm, namely, Psalm 87; and that he made a correction or two in the rendering given in our ordinary metrical version of that Psalm, by which corrections the glorious missionary sense of the Psalm was much more clearly revealed.

The corrections referred to, as I later found, that version received also in the Revised Version of the Irish Presbyterian Church, with a portion of whose version of that Psalm I would conclude my Paper, quoting it not without emotion on several grounds, and not least at the words—

> "Lo, Tyrus, and with it the land
> Where dwells the Philistine,'

as I think of these once glorious lands of Syria and Palestine —these long desolations—and think that they will be glorious yet.

"Things glorious are said of thee,
Thou city of the Lord.
Rahab and Babel I as those
That know me will record :

Lo, Tyrus, and with it the land
Where dwells the Philistine,
And likewise Ethiopia ;
This one was born therein.

Of Zion shall be said, This man
And that man born was there ;
And He that is the Lord most high
Himself shall stablish her.

When God the people writes, He'll count
That this man born was there.
The singers as the players say,
My well-springs in Thee are."

THE PSALMS IN MISSION FIELDS.*

By MISS KATE A. HILL, Lyallpur, Punjab, India.

What is the difference in the use of the Psalms in the mission field and their use in any other field ?

They are the best expression of the experience of the human soul in search of God to be found in all the range of literature. So when a Hindu becomes a child of God they express his feelings just as they do those of any other converted soul in other lands.

The Psalms have the advantage in Oriental mission lands that they are decidedly Oriental, and one comes to understand and appreciate them more fully when he gets some acquaintance with Oriental character.

* Read by Rev. Samuel Lyle Orr, Monaghan, Ireland.

They were written under circumstances very similar to those which exist in mission lands, in the midst of the heathen and God's enemies.

Their figures and ideas meet a response here which they cannot have so fully in so-called Christian lands.

How many Psalms speak of idols and idolaters, of the heathen, of the great conflict between light and darkness, of the need of righteousness, and the final triumph of the true God and His people!

The inhabitants of mission lands need to see the greatness and glory of the true God in comparison with false gods (see Psalm 115, etc.); His willingness to pardon (Psalms 32, 40, 116, etc.); His loving-kindness and tender mercy (Psalm 103, etc.); His requirements of a holy life (Psalms 15, 24, etc.); the value of repentance (Psalms 51 and 130); the excellence of the Bible as compared with the sacred books of other religions (Psalms 19, 119, etc.); the futility of opposing Christianity (Psalms 2, 68, 93, 96, etc.); the blessedness of true religion (Psalm 112); the universal spread of the Gospel (Psalms 67 and 72); and a multitude of other things which are more powerfully expressed in the Psalms than in any human songs—to say nothing of the fact that they are God's Word, and hence infallible.

The Psalms are acceptable as a way into the heart of a Mohammedan, for he recognizes that they are part of God's revelation; and for this we can alway appeal to them. There is no way so good for getting hold of a Mohammedan as to read to him, or get him to read, the Psalms.

One of our missionaries says that for this reason he has used the Psalms as texts more than any other portion of the Word. First by singing a Psalm he attracts the attention of his audience, and then uses it as his text.

It is said that the present Amir of Afghanistan reads the Psalms daily.

What better text to use in locating the need of repentance than the 51st Psalm? or what more fitting close to emphasize the truths taught by a sermon on repentance?

One missionary tells of a convert, who had gone back to Mohammedanism, being brought to repentance and final restoration by singing to her this 51st Psalm. Another begged to hear it again lest she might not live to hear it when the missionary returned on her next yearly visit, and joined heartily when it was sung to her.

It touches their soul's need as no other song has ever done.

One of the followers of Brahmo Samajh said, "There is nothing in all devotional literature equal to the Psalms." They use them in their religious services. The Aryas also use portions of them

as their hymns. They use hymns in the same way. They mutilate them, taking out the name of Christ, and inserting the name of Krishna and other gods.

The Psalms are transferable into all tongues, and are capable of being expressed in all sorts of metres, and are adapted to all classes of people. Our own United Presbyterian Synod of the Punjab has issued a complete Psalm-book in the Urdu. The Psalms are set to English tunes. They are used in the Church services, especially where the congregation is made up of educated people. The boys and girls in the schools, especially the Christian boarding-schools, commit them to memory, and love to sing them.

One missionary writes of the love the girls in her Hindu and Mohammedan girls' school showed for these Urdu Psalms. Recently, in a Zenana in Lyallpur city, we met a woman who had attended this school eleven years ago, and she repeated a Psalm to us, and told us how she loved to sing it at her spinning.

Perhaps the book of Psalms most loved and appreciated by the people is a small collection of Psalms issued in 1891. The Psalms are translated in the Punjabi, the dialect common in the Punjab, and are set to native music. While the Urdu Psalms are used and loved, it is this Bhajou book that took hold of the hearts of the people. It is highly appreciated by our neighbours of the Church Missionary Society and American Presbyterian Missions. As many of the Christians cannot read, their hearts are more established in faith by what they sing than by what is preached to them.

In these days of plague, the 91st Psalm is a great comfort to our native Church, as to ourselves. Many of the missionaries have found that tenth verse literally true, "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy tent" (R.V.). One says, "The 91st Psalm is about as good an antidote for plague as one could wish. I have used it, and know."

Rev. J. F. Allman, of the American Presbyterian Mission, in the preface to his edition of the Psalms, writes—"The Church needs the Psalms. Praying Christians, during the mutiny in this country, found little in the hymns in common use to suit their terrible circumstances. Who knows what trials the followers of Christ may yet have to pass through in this country? Only God knows, and He did know from the beginning, and has provided them with Divine Songs to interpret their sorrow, and bear in God's own words their cries to the Throne."

How suitable are the Psalms for the missionaries marching in God's sacramental host, surrounded by idolaters and

followers of the false prophet! Those battle hymns, the 46th and the 110th; those anti-idolatrous songs, the 115th and the 135th; those mournful laments, the 59th and the 137th; those missionary hymns, the 67th and the 72nd; those songs of Zion, the 48th, 84th, and 87th; those triumphal odes, that precious up-look and out-look, the 45th; and a multitude of other songs which will readily suggest themselves to lovers of God's Word!

How sweet and appropriate these Songs may appear in Europe and America! They seem to be intoned with a still richer, fuller meaning in a land whose condition is so similar to that of the region where they had their origin, and under circumstances where every figure and sentiment appears to have a present and peculiar application.

PRAISE—Psalm 2, 7-12.

Rev. Professor Petticrew, M.A., D.D., D.Lit., Londonderry, Ireland, before reading a Paper by Miss Minnehaha Finney, Missionary in Egypt, said that all the Papers read that morning on "The Psalms and Mission Work" had been written by missionaries in the foreign field. Apart from their intrinsic importance and value, they had an especial merit and importance because of their bearing on the object of the Conference. They had all heard in the discussions on this subject the statement that whatever might be said about hymns, work in the mission field could not be carried on without them. One fact was worth a thousand arguments. Here they had some of the most important and successful missions in modern times carried on by the use of the Psalms alone. In her contribution Miss Finney said the Mohammedans loved the Psalms. The Christian Church should thank God that the translations of the Psalms were recognized in the Arabic literary world as gems of Arabic literature. Up and down the Valley of the Nile Psalms were being sung, and in this way God's Word had found an entry where, perhaps, it might not otherwise have come.

THE UTILITY OF THE PSALMS IN SPREADING THE GOSPEL IN THE LAND OF THE NILE.*

By MISS MINNEHAHA FINNEY, Mansoura, Egypt.

There is a saying—"History repeats itself." Carrying out this idea, we might say that the history of the Christian Church of the present day, beginning with the Reformation, and during succeeding centuries branching out through missionary efforts into the whole world, is but a repetition of what was accomplished by the early Christian Church, started at Antioch, and spreading out into all parts of the then known world by the zealous efforts of devoted missionaries, among whom Paul was the pioneer.

We have no *definite* record of what was used in the Praise Service of the early Christian Church, but since Christ put His sanction upon the Praise Service of the Old Dispensation by singing the Hallel—the 113th to the 118th Psalms—at the "Last Supper", the first service of the New Dispensation, there is little doubt but that the Psalms were used in the Praise Service of the early Christian Church. So, from the Apostolic age to the present era of renewed and enlarged missionary effort, the Psalms of David have been more or less used as a medium of praise, and fittingly so, as testified to by Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, in the fourth century, who says of them—"They appear to me a mirror of the soul of everyone who sings them; they enable him to perceive his own emotions, and to express them in the words of the Psalms. He who hears them read receives them as if they were spoken for *him*. Conscience-struck, he will either humbly repent, or hearing how the trust of believers was rewarded by God, rejoice as if His mercy were promised to *him* in particular, and begin to thank God. Yet, in its pages you find portrayed man's whole life, the emotions of his soul, and the frames of his mind. We cannot conceive of anything richer than the Book of Psalms. If you need penitence, if anguish or temptation have befallen you, if you have escaped persecution and oppression, or are immersed in deep affliction, concerning each and all, you may find instruction, and state it to God in the words of the Psalter."

This testimony of one who was conspicuous in the early Church, as author of important treatises on the essential

* Read by Rev. Professor Petticrew, M.A., D.D., D.Lit., Londonderry, Ireland.

Divinity of Christ as the God-man, has peculiar significance to those who have been sent to Egypt as workers in the Master's kingdom, among the followers of the false prophet Mohammed, who are believers in God, but deny the Divinity of Christ.

The American mission in Egypt is conducted by the United Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, which is a Psalm-singing body; and those of us whom she has sent there as her missionaries, believe it to be no accident that a Psalm-singing Church should have been led to direct her missionary efforts to the Valley of the Nile, which might be figuratively called the "University of Islam", as Arabia has been called the "Cradle of Islam". In Cairo is situated the great Mohammedan University, El-Azhar, to which students come from all over the world, and from which year by year go forth hundreds of Moslem missionaries to carry the doctrines of Islam to their native countries.

The Mohammedans love and revere the Psalms. Their Oriental setting appeals to them; the majestic swing of their language thrills them; their characterization of God fills them with awe. The Christian Church should thank God that the translation of the Psalms in Arabic is recognized in the Arabic literary world as a gem of Arabic literature.

A zealous young evangelist in Egypt, who was educated in the University of El-Azhar, then afterwards converted to Christianity, and who has been singularly blessed in his efforts to reach his fellow-students, said in conversation—"My one aim in life is to teach Christ and Him crucified to my brethren." He always began with the Psalms, for they are, he said, full of Christ; and His character, offices, triumphs, and even the leading particulars of His life, are set forth in a way which so peculiarly appeals to the Mohammedan mind that one who studies them thoroughly cannot resist their convincing power.

For several years the writer studied the Arabic language with a learned Mohammedan Sheikh. Naturally, the reading of the Arabic Bible was included in our course of study, and we were led into many arguments on the truths presented. When we came to the Psalms, I was much impressed by the way the fanatical old Sheikh listened to them, admired them, and delved into them. I also committed to memory some of the Psalms in metre, and it was the delight of the old man's heart to drill me in the correct rendition of them. One day I said to him, "We sing these Psalms in church." He liked the idea, and came to church to hear them sung.

One day the pastor of the congregation in Mansoura was sitting by his study window, preparing his sermon for the

following Sabbath, when he heard a song—one of Zion's Songs, "The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want"—being sung by some girlish voices behind a closely-screened harem window across the street. He said, "I was astonished to hear a Psalm sung in a Mohammedan home. Then I remembered that those girls were in Miss Finney's school, and had learned God's Songs there."

There is also a large Jewish community in Egypt, and they are drawn to us because, as they say, "you sing our songs of Zion." Two lovely Jewesses in Alexandria, who became converts to Christianity, and who, because of this, were confined by their relatives within the limits of their homes and deprived of their Bibles, found great comfort and pleasure in the Psalms, which they had learned to sing in school.

The Egyptian Evangelical Church numbers 50 organized congregations. There are 215 stations, where services are held. There are 6,526 members of the Church, and 147 Sabbath Schools, and 9,697 Sabbath School pupils. The day and boarding schools number 186, in which there are 14,181 pupils.

And so it is, up and down the Valley of the Nile, all over the broader expanse of the Delta, God's praises are being sung, in the words of the inspired Psalter, by the pious, humble native Christian, by the Moslem Sheikh, by the shrill, gay voices of the children in the school-room, and, perchance, in homes where God's Word has never had other entrance.

"Then princes great and mighty
Shall come from Egypt lands;
To God in supplication
Shall Cush stretch forth his hands.

He rides on heaven of heavens,
Which He of old did found;
Lo, when His voice is uttered
His words in might abound."—Ps. 68, 31-33.

DISCUSSION.

Rev. Joseph Corkey, LL.D., Glendermot, Londonderry, Ireland, said—Mr. Chairman, I would like to emphasize the fact referred to by Dr. Petticrew, not only as to the importance of the Psalm-singing Churches and their missions,

but also as to the size of this United Presbyterian Church of North America. I may say that I was led a good many years ago to read some of the periodicals connected with this Church. I am very familiar with its history and also with its work. When I managed the *Christian Banner*, I got for insertion in its pages, a history of the Church, from one of its ministers, and an account of its missions and of its educational institutions. I have also latterly been brought into closer connection with its missions, as a member of my family is engaged in their work in Egypt. I wish to remind you that this is a large Church. It has about a thousand congregations—that is to say, nearly twice as many as the Irish Presbyterian Church has. It extends across the whole of North America. It has a good many congregations in the city of New York. It also carries on mission work and has congregations on the Pacific coast; and you may be interested to know that there is a delegate here who comes from that region, 6,000 miles distant, to attend this Conference. We are told by some that mission work cannot be carried on except you have uninspired hymns. Now, anyone who is acquainted with the work of this Church knows that there is no modern mission that has been more successful in any way, either in education or in conversions, than the two missions of this United Presbyterian Church. I have had the opportunity of reading the testimonies of a great many visitors to the Nile Valley, as to their impressions of the great work that is being done there by this Church. I repeat, it is all being done by Psalm-singers, and in connection with the use in worship of the Psalms alone. It is also doing a great mission work at home. It is a living, active missionary Church, and is extending in proportion to its numbers as fast as any other Church in America.

The thing I rose to emphasize is that all these missions in Egypt, in the Punjab, and from New York to San Francisco, are being carried on by Psalm-singers, by men and women who use no other medium of praise but the Psalms. I think this is important in view of statements that are often made, as if such a thing was not at all possible. All this work to which I have referred is being done effectually and well; and is more enduring, perhaps, than work that is founded on uninspired hymns.

Rev. J. C. K. Milligan, D.D., New York, U.S.A., said—Mr. Chairman, you know the fact, that in the Revised Version of the Old Testament the Holy Spirit's name everywhere begins with a small letter. Nowhere, from Genesis to Malachi, is the Holy Spirit recognized as a person. I read in

the Belfast *Witness*, when there were discussions here in Ireland on the Psalmody question, a letter written by Professor Heron, declaring that the one line that we sang this morning from the 51st Psalm was all the praise that the Book of Psalms furnished for the Holy Spirit; and he asserted that, on the contrary, the New Testament was full of the Holy Spirit, and that He was everywhere in the New Testament. Now, the fact is that there are whole books in the New Testament in which the Holy Spirit is not named by any title. There are but few instances, comparatively, in which the Holy Spirit, in any of the names by which He is designated, is named, contrary to Professor Heron's statement. But as to the Psalms, He is not only named in this 51st Psalm, but in a few other places. The feeling that has been prevalent among a great many is, that the Holy Spirit somehow or other did not have any existence, or was not acting or operating, in the Old Testament. He always existed; and He was just as active and efficient from the days of Adam to the days of Malachi as He has been since, in applying the benefits of Christ's Redemption, which, of course, is revealed more clearly in the New Testament Scriptures than in the Old.

But, again, why is the Holy Spirit so seldom mentioned? They tell us why. In the days of Jesus the Holy Spirit was not yet manifested. You know there were great promises that referred to the Holy Spirit as "floods upon the dry ground". He was represented as yet to come. It was not merely the Messiah that was to come: the Messiah was to send the Holy Spirit in floods upon the waste heritage of God in this world. It was that that was referred to in the text which says, "the Holy Spirit was not yet given." He had not yet been manifested in the fulfilment of this glorious promise of the Spirit Who was to be poured from on high. But, again, why is not the Holy Spirit mentioned? Well, let me answer. The Holy Spirit is the Author of the Bible; and the Holy Spirit did not put Himself forward especially, because, as Jesus promised in regard to Him, when He should come, "He shall not speak of Himself;" "He will glorify Me;" and from beginning to end of the Holy Book of God the Spirit, its Author, has glorified Jesus, God's Son manifest in the flesh. And then, still more, in connection with the fact that the Holy Spirit is not frequently mentioned in the Old Testament, neither is the Son. You have to go a good piece in the Bible before you find the distinction between the Father and the Son. We have to look at the revelations of God in regard to the work of the Father and the work of the Son to know whether, here or there, it is this person or the other that is referred

to. We get a definite statement of Father and Son in the 2nd Psalm; but put your finger on the place where, definitely and distinctly, the Father and the Son are presented in the other Psalms. Are They absent because They are not named? Is there no Father? Is there no Son of God where these distinct Persons are not pointed out? Who is Jehovah?

Now, I will answer as to the Holy Spirit. He is from Genesis to Malachi. What is His work? He is the Teacher. What is His work? He is the Sanctifier. What is His work? He reveals God. And in the Psalms how often we find the prayers, "Teach me," "Lead me." All these are prayers to the Holy Spirit; all these call for that blessed and Holy One Who manifested the Son of God in the fulness of the Spirit, never before or since enjoyed in the same measure by anyone in the flesh. Now, then, we say to those who think that the Psalms teach nothing about the Holy Spirit, that they do not know anything about the Holy Spirit more than they learn from the Book of Psalms, for these are part of His work, as is fully and clearly revealed, not as expressly applied to His person; but, nevertheless, the work is His special and separate work, as can clearly be traced on through the Psalms. And while I believe Jehovah is the Lord Jesus, nevertheless, again and again, the address to Jehovah is to the Holy Spirit, and the reference is to His special work. The Father does not sanctify as a Person. Jesus, the Son of God, does not sanctify as a Person; but He sends the Holy Spirit to do this work; and in the Psalms, from beginning to end, you find the work of the Holy Spirit revealed and declared.

"Albia, Iowa, July 28th, 1902.

"To Rev. Professor Petticrew, D.D.,
"Belfast, Ireland.

"Dear Sir—At the request of the Rev. Mr. Lowry, of Clarinda, Iowa, I send the enclosed Paper, which I was requested by him to write, directly to you. I regret very much that I have not been able to send it sooner, but hope that it may yet reach you in time for the Conference. I regret far more that the circumstances under which it has been prepared have been such as have made it difficult, or rather

impossible, to treat it in a manner worthy either of the importance of the subject or the honourable and learned assembly for whose consideration it is presented. But, such as it is, it is presented with an earnest prayer to God that He will own and establish by His blessing whatever of His truth there may be presented in it.

"I trust that you may have a pleasant and profitable Conference, and that, in the providence of God, it may be richly blessed to the establishment of the souls of the faithful, and the recovery of those who have been led out of the right ways of the Lord. I had hoped that I might be able to be present in person as I returned from India, but that proved to be impossible of arrangement. But I assure you I shall, in company with many others, await with much interest the report of your deliberations.

"I remain, my dear sir,

"Faithfully yours in a common faith,

"G. W. MORRISON."

THE PSALMS NEEDED IN FOREIGN MISSION WORK.*

By REV. G. W. MORRISON, Gujranvale, India.

Are they? Emphatically, Yes. Aside altogether from the question of Divine appointment—which it is not my province to discuss—and the adaptability of the Psalms as a book of praise for the world at large, I firmly believe that the Divine book of Divine praise is in a very special sense necessary to the highest and truest success of Christian effort among the heathen and non-Christian races of the world. I am not ignorant of the fact that the great majority of foreign missionaries practically ignore the God-given Psalter, nor would I think of denying that a very large measure of success has attended their efforts. But I am convinced that whatever measure of success they may have is in spite of, not on account of, their use of human compositions as the matter of praise. Truly God's thoughts are not ours, and He gives many rich spiritual blessings in connection with the use of very imperfect human instrumentalities, and it is well for us that He does, as we should fare but badly did we get no blessings but those that flow through perfect human channels. At the same time

* This Paper arrived after the Conference.

it is clearly true that the better the channel, the fuller and clearer will be the current that flows through it. And surely those who neglect this Divine channel of blessing miss much that might, that should, be theirs.

I. The Psalms are needed in the mission field. The missionary himself needs the Psalms, both to nourish his spiritual life and to strengthen him for his work. He must live and move and have his being in a vitiated moral atmosphere, which is just as destructive along the higher, spiritual plane, as poisoned air is on the lower, physical plane. Reared in a Christian land, the missionary does not realize how much of his spiritual strength is due to his environment until he is taken from it, and transplanted into a region where soil, air, and, indeed, all surroundings are different—and different, too, by being harmful instead of helpful. Deprived of the strength that fellowship with other Christians gives; cut off from the helpfulness of public worship in a language easily understood; unavoidably exposed to temptations of a peculiarly seductive character, for resisting which the previous sheltered life has illy fitted him; surrounded constantly by those whose moral thought and life are on a low level—the missionary must early learn that the only sure ground of confidence that he has is in God, and in Him alone. With the Psalmist, he must learn not to trust in any surrounding circumstances, no matter how helpful they may be in themselves, but in God. And from whom can he learn this so well as from the Psalmist? Lonely and depressed, he will find his experiences voiced in the Psalter in a way that seems marvellous. He misses his fellows. Let him turn to the 42nd Psalm—

> "My soul within me is poured out,
> When this I think upon;
> Because that with the multitude
> I heretofore had gone."

And yet he is reminded of the help that David received, which is his also, and so he may sing on :—

> "O why art thou cast down, my soul?
> Why in me so dismayed?
> Trust God, for I shall praise Him yet,
> *His* presence is my aid."

The missionary is in danger of being overwhelmed by the vastness of the evil forces that confront him. He needs the

constant tonic of those Songs, which, while they recognize to the full the awful powers of darkness, never lose sight of the ultimate and glorious victory. Even while he stands all alone in the midst of millions in darkness, by faith he can sing—

"All ends of earth remember shall,
And turn to God the Lord:
By all the kindreds of the earth
His name shall be adored."

II. The heathen need to hear the Psalms sung. All classes recognize the efficiency of singing as a means of arresting attention, and also for conveying Christian truth. But great care should be taken that it is the *truth* that is sung before the heathen, and how be so sure as by singing that which God has given us to sing?

There is something of truth in nearly all, if not all, non-Christian religious systems; but it is so intermingled with error as to be largely vitiated. And it appears that often those are the hardest to reach whose belief approximates most nearly to the truth. But, however great the amount of truth there may be in some of these systems, I believe that all are in error in regard especially to the great doctrines that deal with God, sin, salvation, and holy living.

To the great multitude of the human race the idea of God is but the idea of man magnified. And to them there has seemed a necessity for gods many, because they could not conceive of a man great or wise enough to do so many and such different works. The Psalms give clearly a conception of God infinitely higher. They insist on His spirituality, the boundlessness of His wisdom, holiness, and power. He was before man: He knows man before he comes into being. Indeed, the Psalms contain a compend of the being and character of God that is of the greatest possible value in dealing with those in error.

At the same time the Psalms insist constantly on the awful character and the terrible results of that "abominable thing" which God hates, but at which foolish man mocks—sin. The Psalter reveals to man his natural state, "conceived in sin," inclined towards sinful acts, binding himself with the chains of evil habits, and moving on to an eternity without hope as the result of his sinful life.

But, thank God, it does not leave him there. It constantly holds out the hope of salvation, the possibility of deliverance from sin and its consequences. Man is inclined to hope for this deliverance from sin by his own effort. Standing in the

community, ancestry, wealth, fame, good works—in these he trusts for standing with God. But the Psalter insists that the redemption of man is precious, that no mere man can give to God a ransom, either for his own life or that of his brother. The salvation of the just is from the Lord alone. There is a Saviour Who is from all eternity, Who gives Himself to a cruel death, surrounded and scorned by His enemies, that sinful man may live. Salvation is from God; and the Saviour is Divine, while at the same time of the same race as those He saves. These are truths, contained in the Psalter, which the heathen need, being ignorant of them.

III. The convert from heathenism needs the Psalter. He needs it for the same reason that the heathen man needs it. It is only a little while since he was a heathen himself, and he finds it a difficult matter to get away from the influence of the old erroneous beliefs. A great change has taken place in him. He has been born again, it is true; but he is only a babe in Christ. He needs help for the establishment of his character from every possible source. He needs to constantly refresh his mind in regard to the fundamental facts as to God's being and character, his own natural condition, his sinfulness, and the wonderful way in which his feet have been taken from the mire and the clay.

But he needs other help, also, that the Psalter will give him. God has created in him a new heart and a right spirit; but he must learn how to walk in newness of life. The practical obligation to every-day righteousness is kept constantly before him in these Songs. They emphasize both his duty to God and to his fellow-man; and show, also, how right relations with both depend upon his fulfilment of his obligations. The new life is of God, not of man. But, at the same time, it is in man, and is evidenced by fruits of righteousness. The root can be planted by God alone, but, once planted, must, unless development is arrested, bear fruit in holy living.

The convert who, by singing them, is familiar with the Psalms, is kept on his guard as to the insidious character of sin; and, being forewarned, he is forearmed and strengthened to meet the temptations that assail him. He is kept humble as he is reminded of the injurious effects that follow upon the "sins and faults of youth", even though they have been confessed and forgiven; as he recalls that his salvation was due to God alone, and that he stands and walks only by that help which is from on high. All that he has or can have of blessing is through communion with God, and that communion is conditioned upon his fitness for it. As in the 24th Psalm, he has before him the question and answer—

"What man shall the hill of Jehovah ascend?
And who in the place of His holiness stand?
The man of pure heart, and of hands without stain,
Who swears not to falsehood, nor loves what is vain."

But how attain to such a high standard? How can weak, sinful man ever hope to fulfil such high conditions? That, too, is of God—

"He shall from Jehovah the blessing receive,
The God of salvation shall righteousness give."

He who uses these Songs with "the spirit, and . . . . with the understanding also" cannot be ignorant of the great, the fundamental fact, that God the Saviour is and must be, to him, "all and in all"—

"But the salvation of the just
Is from the Lord above;
He, in the time of their distress,
Their stay and strength doth prove."

Another way in which the Psalter meets a need of the convert is, in emphasizing his individuality. Most heathen races avoid the thought of personal responsibility either to man or to God, largely because of their social organization. The tribe or the community is the unit that is responsible. In India, appeal to a man to do what he knows to be his duty, and one of the most common excuses is, "I am only one man; what can I do?" The Psalter meets this need. While it clearly teaches the truth in regard to man's relations as a unit in the social life, it emphasizes his individual accountability and individual responsibility—

"My sins and faults of youth
Do Thou, O Lord, forget;
. . . . . .
Now, for Thine own name's sake,
O Lord, I Thee entreat
To pardon my iniquity,
For it is very great."

The 51st Psalm is a most striking example of the recognition of personal sin, and exhibition of personal repentance; and whatever may be the mother tongue of the awakened sinner, he finds this Psalm expresses his own personal feelings.

And especially do those who live in lands where constant familiarity with the grossest forms of sin have deadened conscience, until they seem scarcely to have any conscience of sin at all, need such channels to guide their thought into the truth.

IV. But not only does the individual convert from heathenism have special need of the Psalter, the Church also needs it in a peculiar way. The missionary of the cross has done a great, an all-important, work if he reaches some individuals with the truth, and sees them rejoicing in salvation through Christ. But that is by no means all his work, important as that is. He must, as his Master did, establish a Church, which shall be independent, self-supporting, and self-propagating. And, to that end, it must be a Church that is established upon the sure foundation of God's truth, that is filled with the spirit of Christ—the spirit of self-sacrificing, devoted, daring love.

God's Psalter contains God's truth, even its enemies being the witnesses—even those elements of the truth that are so displeasing to the natural man that he would like to ignore them. To those that are at ease in Zion, some of the terrible denunciations of sin and sinners found in the Psalms may seem unduly harsh. But those branches of the Church that are out on the firing line, engaged often in hand-to-hand struggles for very existence with the forces of evil, find even in those strong words fitting battle-cries. With their souls revolted by the awful diabolism of the heathen around them, familiar as they must become with the devilish ingenuity with which those hardened in sin lay their toils for the innocent, to the end that they may become like unto themselves, given up to unspeakable abominations, the members of the Church that is in the midst of heathendom can rejoice as they sing—

> "But, God upon transgressors shall
> A common ruin send;
> And when the wicked are cut off,
> In woe their days shall end."

The Church that faces the unnumbered hosts of heathenism, entrenched behind ramparts that are hoary with antiquity, needs the spirit of dauntless confidence in God, with which the Psalms are filled, and with which she may be filled through familiarity with those Psalms. While recognizing the weakness, the utter futility of all her efforts, from the merely human standpoint, she needs to be taught to be strong

in the Lord and the power of His might, while with assured confidence she sings—

"Of corn a handful in the earth,
On tops of mountains cast,
Shall wave with fruit like Lebanon
When shaken with the blast."

The Church that is subjected to all the powerful opposition of wicked, heathenish rulers, who are filled with rage as they see the superstitions, that were the engines of their oppression, overthrown, needs the strength and encouragement that the 2nd Psalm is filled with. Vain is their rage, though for a time, as in Japan, it may seem to blot out the very name of Christian. All their plots, their combinations, their leagues, are scorned by Him, who has exalted Christ to be King and Head. It is not the persecuted Church that is in danger, but those who in their rebellious and ungrateful strength lay impious hands upon the Bride of Him Who is anointed King of kings and Lord of lords.

The missionary Church when enjoying in peace and quietness the favour of God, needs then, too, the Psalms to keep her constantly mindful of the fact that these favours and blessings are given her not simply for her own comfort and enjoyment, but to enable her the better to be a means of blessing to the world about her. As she pleads—

"O God, to us show mercy,
And bless us in Thy grace;
Cause Thou to shine upon us
The brightness of Thy face,"

she must never for a moment forget that all this favour is to the end

"That so throughout all nations
Thy way may be well known,
And unto every people
Thy saving health be shown."

Yes, there is special need for the Psalms in the foreign mission field. The work there is of God, and to bring men to God. The work and the workers need the counsel and comfort, the wisdom, the strength, the encouragement, the trust in God, the assurance of ultimate and complete triumph,

that are to be gained from the constant and reverent use of that Book of Praise which is Divine, and which contains all these helps in a pre-eminent degree, because it is Divine. And man's hope and confidence must never be in himself, or in anything that is of himself, but in that which is Divine—that which is from above.

> "No trust will I place in my bow to defend,
> Nor yet on my sword for my safety depend,
> In God who has saved us, and put them to shame,
> We boast all the day, ever praising His name."

THE PSALMS IN THE EVANGELIZATION AND EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE AMERICAN MISSION IN THE LAND OF THE PHARAOHS.*

By MR. CLARENCE J. WILLIAMSON, Assiout College, Egypt.

The statement was made in the Ecumenical Missionary Conference in New York City, that if the American Mission Training College at Assiout were the only fruit there was to show for all the money contributed for foreign missions, that money would have been well spent; and the whole American Mission in Egypt is generally recognized as one of the most successful and best organized of the missions of the world. In more than two hundred towns and villages of that land of the Pharaohs, are schools for both boys and girls, that are doing a great work in converting men from the religion of the false Prophet to that of the true Messiah, and from the corrupt, half-dead Coptic religion, to the religion of Him Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and Who had been so ignorantly worshipped by them before.

In Cairo, meetings have been held for almost two years by a Mohammedan Sheikh, converted to Christianity by hearing the Word from the lips of a native pastor. At first his efforts to bring his co-religionists to the truth were made light of by them; but he was even permitted to hold meetings in the buildings of the Azhar, the great Mohammedan University of 12,000 students. When they failed to refute his arguments,

* This Paper arrived after the Conference

and his influence became so great that they were frightened, they refused to allow him again inside the University, and prohibited the students from attending his meetings.

A few months ago a prominent Muslem was discussing the workings of the mission with a missionary in Cairo. He made the statement that the influence of the mission was felt and feared by them, and that they realized that if they were to withstand that influence it must be by the same methods used by the mission, and that they were studying them.

These facts show that this mission is eminently successful.

Frequently we hear from persons who do not belong to Psalm-singing denominations, that no effective missionary work can be carried on with the Psalms. In answering this, it is sufficient to say that since the laying of the foundation of the American Mission in Egypt, in 1854, by missionaries sent out by the United Presbyterian Church, nothing but Psalms has been used in the Praise Service. Could one of those who hold that hymns are indispensable to successful missionary effort attend just one service of one of the native congregations and hear the heartiness, if not always the melody, with which everyone, old and young, joins in singing the Songs of the Ages, he would be constrained to change his views. I call to mind one congregation where the minister has been completely blind for many years; but he stands before his people, announces the Psalms and recites them from memory as easily as one gifted with sight would read them. He has known them all his life. He has been a faithful servant of the Lord in Egypt, between thirty and forty years, and has always been perfectly satisfied to praise his God and Saviour by the use of the Psalms of David.

The Egyptian people are naturally fond of music, and if any one of them is blessed with a good voice, he sings at every opportunity; but never yet have the members of the Evangelical Church there been drawn away from their reverence for the Psalms by the hymn-tunes, which are, perhaps, more "catchy" than those to which the stately old Psalms have been set.

I wish to speak more particularly of the work done by the College at Assiout and the use of the Psalms there, as that has been where my interests have centred for the last three years.

There is a yearly attendance of between five and six hundred boys and young men, who flock in from towns, any place between Alexandria on the North and the confines of the Soudan on the South. From this College go the teachers for the village schools, the evangelists and the native pastors who really direct the religious thought of the Protestant Church in Egypt.

In the morning, as soon as the boys of the different dormitory rooms have washed and dressed, they come together again into their respective rooms, where the "heads" of the different rooms read a portion of Scripture and lead in prayer, and all unite in singing a Psalm. At 8-30 o'clock all the five hundred assemble in the chapel, and it is really inspiring to hear that collection of the flower of the young men of Egypt, as they pour forth in praises the words that were used in the Church of God by His chosen people, and that Christ and His disciples sang in the upper room. Travellers who have visited many other mission schools unite in saying they never heard anything like it. John R. Mott, General Secretary of the World's Student-Christian Federation, and a hymn-singer, said the College was a revelation to him. When Ira D. Sankey visited the College a few years ago, he sang the famous hymns, "Throw out the Life Line," and "Saved by Grace". The boys were attracted by the tunes, and for some time we could hear them singing them almost continually around the buildings; but they very soon tired of them, and in a few weeks as we walked along the roads we could hear groups of boys, who had gone off into the fields for a rest, singing the familiar old Psalms that they had known from childhood.

In the College, the Society which is closely allied with the Y.M.C.A., sends out its members two and two into the villages around Assiout, as Christ sent His disciples, and there they teach and preach, and sing the Psalms.

It cannot be contended, either, that these boys come to the College merely to eat of the loaves and fishes, though many have to be turned away every year for lack of room; for, though most of them are very poor, every one is required to pay something, and the Sabbath School collections in a year amount to about $500, or one hundred pounds sterling. If anyone were disposed to think it was from some ulterior motive that they come in, I would like to have him visit a meeting of the Society for the advancement of Protestant Christianity in Egypt, and hear the young men pledging their lives to the service of their Master. I would like to have him hear the experience of some of them, of the hardships they are willing to undergo that they may keep their vows and their faith. Last year one of the graduating class gave up his right to the property of his father, and was disinherited by him, because he insisted on giving his life to the Lord's service. Afterwards he asked to be sent as a teacher to a school "in the hottest part of Egypt", as he said, that he might "become used to the heat," so that he could "be sent as an evangelist to the ignorant people of the Soudan".

Any place you go in Egypt you can find young men who have been in attendance at Assiout College, and the fact almost shows in their faces. About 75 per cent. of the employés of the Government Postal Service between Assiout and Wadi Halfa are from American Mission Schools. When our missionaries went, two years ago, to prospect in Khartoum and Omdurman, great kindness was shown to them by the Muslem chief of police in Khartoum. They were surprised to learn that at one time he had been a student in the College, and had a friendly feeling toward anyone in connection with the mission. One of the most radical Muslem journals in Cairo printed an article in the highest praise of the educational work in the College, and urged the Mohammedans to be as diligent in teaching the Koran as the Americans in Assiout were in teaching the Bible and the use of the Scripture Psalms as the subject-matter of Divine Praise. Is this successful missionary work, or not?

I have spoken particularly of the work of this school, which is only a small part of even the educational work done by the mission, not to speak of the extensive medical and evangelistic work.

The native Church is organized into a Synod and Presbyteries; and many of the congregations have built their own houses of worship, and are entirely self-supporting. There are workers in the Soudan supported by the native Church of Egypt; and it seems evident, on the face of it, that mission work must be called successful among a people who have come to the point of sending out missionaries to other peoples.

Did time permit, I would like to speak of hundreds of instances of self-sacrifice by native Egyptians, and of work done in other lines than educational, that go to prove that the work of the American Mission has been abundantly blessed of the Lord. This mission alone is a refutation of the charge that no successful mission work can be accomplished with the Psalms of David.

THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN AND THE PSALMS.*

By MRS. J. C. ALTER, Monmouth, Illinois, U.S.A.

To the casual observer there is little in the stern, stoical face of the present-day Indian that would suggest the possibility

* This Paper arrived after the Conference.

of music in his soul; yet the songs of a tribe are its heritage, preserving legends and traditions. Music envelops their religious, tribal, and social life, like the atmosphere. The Indians have always been a singing people, because, essentially children of Nature. The earth and sky were open books to them, and they responded with heart and voice, in language abounding in natural imagery. Song is the medium through which the old-time Indians worship their Great Spirit. They tell us that communication between them and this Spirit has been broken, and they choose some object, perhaps, an animal, that will "stand between" in this sacred relation; but when Christ is accepted, they substitute Him in place of a natural object. The following is the tribal prayer of the Omahas—"Wa-Kandal thae thu. Wa-pah-thin, ah-ton-he." "Great Spirit! hear, poor and needy, I stand." The words and music are full of pathos, and reveal the yearning of the soul after the true light.

The Indians of our United Presbyterian Mission in Oregon have a keen appreciation of the Psalms. As a people they readily catch the spirit of the shepherd king, who "looked up through Nature to Nature's God", and when Christ touches their hearts, their feelings find expression in the prayer-songs of Israel. I have heard them singing, "Lord, bless and pity us, shine on us with Thy face," with a devotion and fervour that is often sadly lacking in congregations of our own race. Many of our older Christian Indians cannot frame the words in English, but the sentiment of the Psalms has been made plain to them through the interpreter, and our old Christian women, with the abiding light in their hearts, lift their withered, sorrow-furrowed faces and croon—

"My soul with expectation doth
Depend on God, indeed;
My strength and my salvation do
From Him alone proceed."

These precious Songs have opened up the way to the hearts of heathen Indians when other means have failed. Away out on the southern part of the Warm Spring Reservation, a remnant of the Piute tribe is located, wretchedly poor and degraded. We visited their camp one day, and on entering one of the largest tents occupied by several families, we found them at their noon-day meal. They received us courteously, but our presence visibly embarrassed them. Dinner over, we discovered, to our embarrassment, that they were quietly stealing out, and we were left in possession, except for a few

old people who were, perhaps, not able to effect their escape. We commenced singing from the Bible Songs, and in five minutes the tent was filled with reverent listeners. Scripture lesson and prayer followed, and as we were leaving, the old chief said, "If you will come back in one week my people will be gathered to hear you." The old religious songs of the Indians will soon be forgotten, and it is well, for they lack the underlying, vital theme which runs like a scarlet thread throughout the Mosaic structure of the Songs of the Ages.

Sing on! ye tribes of the wandering foot, and weary breast! A new era is dawning, and through its vistas you may see, not the happy hunting ground of yore, but the New Jerusalem with Christ enthroned, where we shall sing with one tongue the praises of Him Who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.

"Th' afflicted's prayer He will not scorn.
This ever shall be on record:
And generations yet unborn
Shall praise and magnify the Lord.

He from His holy place looks down,
The earth He views from heaven high,
To hear the pris'ner's mourning groan,
And free them that are doomed to die.

That Zion and Jerus'lem, too,
His name and praise may well record,
When people and the kingdoms do
Assemble all to praise the Lord."

PRAISE—Psalm 67. BENEDICTION.

FRIDAY, 8th AUGUST.

AFTERNOON MEETING, from 3 to 5 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN :—

REV. S. G. KENNEDY, LL.D., Belfast, Ireland.

PRAISE—Psalm 90, 14-17.

Rev. A. T. Hemphill, Swanwick, Illinois, U.S.A., led in prayer.

Chairman's Address :—

A Conference of Psalm-singers is a unique event, and is calculated to do a great deal of good. In olden times the tribes of Israel went up periodically to Jerusalem, not simply that they might worship the God of their fathers, but that they might encourage one another ; and so we meet that we may take counsel, and that we may encourage one another in the great work to which, under God, we have put our hands. Our meeting together should be an inspiration to us. A conference of this kind is not got up on account of a matter of trivial moment : the issues at stake are momentous. They have to do with the position, the purity, the holiness, and, in a deep and very important sense, with the prosperity of the Church of the living God. But the consideration that outweighs every other is this, that they have to do with the glory of Jesus Christ, the King and Head of His Church. It is well that we should emphasize this thought. If we can do nothing more by these meetings than simply draw attention to the Psalms, and lead men carefully to consider them, our meetings will not be in vain. Now, it seems to me that the great principle lying at the root of the question with which we have to deal, is the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Is His King-

ship to be acknowledged, or is it not? Are His commands to be obeyed, or are they not? Men, generally speaking, are ready to recognize that Christ is King of the Church; but they are not so ready to carry this principle to its logical issue. Has Christ given us a command in regard to the matter of worship? If He has, that should decide the question for us for ever. The point, then, with us will not be—what has Christ left unsaid, or what has He simply passed over, but what has Christ commanded? That and nothing else will we keep to. That Christ has given command in relation to this matter will be generally conceded. A book of sacred Songs was given to the Old Testament Church, and the use of these Songs was enjoined. When we come to the New Testament Church we find that the use of these sacred Songs is continued. Here is a Divine injunction; here is a command of Christ in regard to this part of worship. That should be decisive for us. But it is said that the Psalms speak of Christ only as a Saviour to come. I ask, is this true? Does the 22nd Psalm speak of Christ as a Saviour to come? Does not that Psalm bring Christ before us in His sufferings, in His death? Do those words that we sang yesterday bring Christ before us as a Saviour to come?

"Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious,
Ascended up on high;
And in triumph victorious led
Captive captivity:

Thou hast received gifts for men,
For such as did rebel;
Yea, ev'n for them, that God the Lord
In midst of them might dwell."

Again, it is said that the Psalms present Christ to us under a veil. Now, the man who makes that statement gives evidence that he has not read the Psalms. As we read those Psalms we stand face to face with Christ, and behold Him in the peerlessness of the glory of His person and of His great work.

But another allegation is that the spirit of some of the Psalms is inconsistent with the spirit of the New Testament, or the Christian dispensation. Here again we have to deal with ignorance. The spirit of the New Testament is the spirit of the Old Testament. A reference, of course, is made specially to the "imprecatory" Psalms. This subject has

already been dealt with; but let me ask in connection with it—Is it wrong for us to pray that God will do what we know He will do, what in accordance with His wisdom and justice and righteousness and holiness He has, to speak with reverence, bound Himself to do? And is it wrong for us to praise God for acting in harmony with His own gracious and glorious character? I think in these questions we have sufficient answer for those who raise objections in connection with the "imprecatory" Psalms. But supposing that we were not able satisfactorily to answer these objections, I do not for one moment admit that that could be held as militating against the use of the Psalms in the worship of God, inasmuch as the Psalms and they alone have behind them the command of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, for use in the Ordinance of Praise. That determines the question for us. Christ has appointed the "imprecatory" Psalms as well as the others to be used in His worship. And we have in that fact the implied assurance that they are perfectly adapted for that worship, and for the great end to which He appointed them. "As for God perfect is His way." God's works are all perfect. There is no imperfect planet or star. You look at the little particle of dust, as we speak of it, on the wing of the butterfly: it bears evidence of the wisdom, skill, and goodness of the Creator of all things. God stamps, so to speak, His own character on everything that He does; and in reference to the Psalms we have the glory and the perfectness of the Deity brought distinctly into view. Now, in using the Psalms we are keeping to the Divine appointment, keeping to the command of God, and to what must be the very best. An old elder in Scotland once remarked to me that the 89th Psalm was worth a cart load of hymns. Why should we lay on God's altar the halt, the lame, the sick, when we can present to Him an offering that is without spot or blemish? Men have not hesitated time after time to predict the ultimate triumph of the hymns. We, as confidently, and I feel a great deal more confidently, can predict the ultimate triumph of the Psalms. As well might men think to keep back the rising tide, or to stay the chariot of the sun, as to prevent the coming of that day when the Psalms, and they alone, will be used in the worship of the living and true God.

THE PSALMS AND THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

By REV. PROFESSOR J. D. HOUSTON, B.A., Coleraine, Ireland.

The Sabbath School differs from the ordinary day school, in that it aims *exclusively* to impart the knowledge of the things that concern the spiritual nature. The teaching of the Sabbath School proceeds along a higher level than the teaching of the ordinary every day school. It is true that, in the week-day school, teaching of a religious kind should intermingle with purely secular teaching. Ideal teaching is that in which the two are so blended that young immortals may have it impressed upon them that they are to live not for earth only, and the gains and pleasures of this world, but for the things that are unseen and eternal. In a right system of education the whole moral and spiritual nature, as well as the intellectual nature, of the child must be contemplated and provided for. Education necessarily is marred by defect if any part of the complex nature of the child is left uncultivated. It can be debated whether the giving of a purely secular education, and, at the same time, altogether neglecting religious training, is not a curse instead of a blessing. To ensure a high toned life, the child must be surrounded by a religious atmosphere, not a denominational atmosphere, but an atmosphere conditioned by the inspired dictum, "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." The whole education of the child will thus be sanctified. It goes without saying that the right education of the young is of immense importance. It may be said that the world's history is made in the home and in the school. The machinery that regulates and controls human affairs, under God, is shaped and geared in these institutions; and the Church and the State will prosper, in proportion as the machinery is well and truly shaped. To teach and train the young to walk on higher levels, to cultivate the noblest ideals, that is the aim of all education. "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace."

The work and aim of the Sabbath School are to lead the young along the higher levels of living, to set before them, when their minds are most plastic and impressible, the purest and grandest ideals. The time is fitting for awakening in the young mind the love of the true, the beautiful, and the good. The hallowed associations of the Lord's Day invite to lofty and noble thoughts. On this day the clamouring voices of

the world are silenced, the din and bustle of business activities are absent, the grace of calmness descends upon us, and the cathedral bells of the heart call to prayer and holy meditation. It is the fittest time in which to woo the young to walk in the paths that lead to God, to truth and righteousness. The enquiring child asks, What mean ye by this cessation from work? What mean ye by this all-pervading solemnity? What mean ye by the ringing of those bells, and by the gathering of those crowds not dressed in the every-day working garb? These eager questions open up the whole subject of Sabbath School teaching. The answer to these questions must explain that we have a higher nature than the animal and material, that there are in us cravings which this world cannot satisfy. The Sabbath School specially cultivates that higher nature. The object of the Sabbath School is not to make good business men, successful managers, people who will make a figure in the world, but to awaken reverence for God and Divine things, to train the young mind and heart to holiness, to make good Christians—in a word, to fashion out of the dark clay of human nature vessels meet for the the Master's use.

The idea of the Sabbath School was a noble one. When Raikes and others conceived this idea, they did a grand service to humanity, they generated a force helpful to the cause of God. Many a one has risen up to bless those who planned and set on foot this enterprise. There are three institutions that are designed to safeguard the morality of the people and to nurture the higher life—the home, the school (*specially* the Sabbath School), and the Church. God has placed human beings in families, and has created the binding ties of family affection which make the home sweet, constituting it a nursery of all that is lovely and becoming. A mother's love and a father's watchful care are the most powerful factors in shaping a noble life. The influences of the school supplement home influences, and intensify them, and make them permanent. We are not to think that the teaching of the Sabbath School is to take the place of home teaching; that would be a mistake. Home teaching is first and best, but the teaching of the Sabbath School is complementary. Perhaps parents sometimes roll the burden of the religious education of their children on the Sabbath School teacher. That is wrong, and inexcusable. God's command in regard to the religious education of the children was first given to *parents*—"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and

when thou risest up . . . . and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house and on thy gates." The parent may not neglect the religious education of the children, he may not delegate it to another, the command of God is imperative, and we may not disobey.

The Sabbath School comes after the home. It comes between the home and the Church, and is the fitting complement of the one and preparation for the other. The teaching in the Sabbath School confirms and stereotypes the teaching of the home, and is a training for the Church. Indeed, in the broadest sense, the home is the foundation of the State and of the Church; and the school, both the ordinary day school and the Sabbath School, supplements and confirms the work of the home in making good citizens. The complexion of the home will be reflected in the State and in the Church. When Napoleon was asked what would regenerate France, he answered, "Good mothers." The mother represents the home; she is the representative of good and holy home influences. The seeds are sown in the home that bear fruit afterwards. Hence the vast importance of early teaching and training. When home influences are wanting, or when they are of a baleful character, the outcome will not tend to good citizenship. The awful peril in the State in the future arises from the waifs and pariahs in the community, the flotsam and jetsam of society, those who know no home, or whose homes are the hotbeds of vice. The obligation under which the State lies to such institutions as Dr. Barnardo's is incalculable; such work as that of the devoted philanthropist is beyond all praise. It is, indeed, the salvation of the country.

Now, it is of prime importance that the manuals of instruction used in the Sabbath School should be of the very highest class, and it goes without saying that the Divinely-inspired manuals are the highest and the best. What was it that the Israelite was commanded to teach his children? It was not what was evolved out of his own mind, however excellent that might be. No; the manual was *given* to him, and it was the very best, "these words, which I command thee this day." That injunction limits the range of instruction to the Divinely-given law, not to be added to, nor to be diminished from. It is understood that praise is part, and a main part, of the programme of work in the Sabbath School, and, indeed, I might say, in the ordinary day school. Song has a mighty teaching power: it conveys knowledge dressed in draperies of beauty that render it irresistibly attractive. Either truth or error, when embodied in song, glides into the heart. We all know how powerful is the effect produced by the singing of national songs, stirring, as they do, the feelings

to the very depths, generating and fostering an enthusiastic comradeship, which will bind the people together as one man in truest patriotism. It has been said, "Give me the making of the ballads of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws." The teachers of error are aware of the insinuating power of song, and hence pernicious doctrines are embodied in the hymnaries used, and so the error, softened and gilded by sweet music, glides into the mind and heart. The devil knows how to employ music to soften the moral fibre of those whom he wishes to lead captive. In the abodes of vice the senses are intoxicated by melting music. Song is the Delilah lap, lying on which the strong man yields to seductive influences and loses his strength. And what a powerful effect has song in the church as the musical rhythm of it steals over the senses, as you sit in the great cathedral, awed by the dim religious light! The danger is that we may mistake the feeling produced for a religious feeling, when it is only and wholly sensuous. Sensuous worship seems to materialize the Deity; it brings down the Infinite within the range of the ken of the finite; it sets limits to Him who in midst of Israel is the only Holy One. That is the peril to which all sensuous worship exposes its votaries. And there is a strong natural desire in us to make the God of Heaven like ourselves, and to think that what is most pleasing to us is most acceptable to the Eternal.

Now, praise constitutes a great part of the exercises in the Sabbath School, and it is of prime importance that the matter of praise should be absolutely pure, free from any taint of error. The young mind is specially receptive. The child is at the most plastic time of life, and can be easily moulded to nobility of character, or the reverse, by the instruction given. Seeds of truth or germs of error can be easily planted, and find a virgin soil in which they readily take root and grow. The fine spirit of the child can be touched to finest issues, or it can be blunted and demoralized according to the teaching given in the critical time of early youth. To touch the spirit to finest issues, it is essential that only purest truth should be brought into contact with it. Now, we are not certain that uninspired hymns are free from the taint of error; we know that many of them are heterodox; but we are certain that the inspired Psalms are absolutely untainted. When we meditate on them, when we sing them, we are brought into touch with truth; and contact with pure truth must have an elevating, refining effect. I think that the same effect will not be produced by meditating on and singing uninspired hymns. They move on a lower level. They may be set to livelier music that will please a flippant taste, but the majesty and

sublimity of the Psalms are wanting. I have often felt, when passing from the consideration of the Psalms to uninspired hymns, as if I had passed from the most refined company to the company of the vulgar. There is, indeed, in regard even to the æsthetic, no comparison between the Psalms and the best of the hymns of human composition. These Psalms attain to the highest level, and it goes without saying that we should in worship aim to reach the highest. It is sometimes said that the Psalms stand on too lofty an eminence for the young mind to reach, and that in consequence we must have something lower. Hence men plead for hymns in the Sabbath School. Is that true? Is it necessary to conduct the child along lower pathways because it is imagined that the higher are not reachable? It seems to me that using uninspired hymns in preference to the Psalms is something like copying the example of the foolish mother, who talks nonsense to the child, thinking that it cannot understand sensible words; but the child can understand something better than nonsense.

Again, it is objected that the Psalms do not contain reference to Christ. I can only say that he is indeed a blind man, and a man whose mental machinery runs in a low groove, who cannot see Christ in the Psalms. It is true, perhaps, we do not find the name Jesus, dear Jesus, in the Psalms, which a sickly sentimentalism introduces *ad nauseam* into many hymns; but we do find Christ in all His glory, the very King of Glory, the Lord, in majesty, riding prosperously because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness. The repetition of the words, "dear Jesus," savours too much of earthly heat; and it may be that the reiteration of these words is in the inverse ratio to the real reverence and love of those who use them. They make Christ too common. It is true, in one way we can lie on Christ's bosom, but that nearness to Him does not beget any familiarity. He is ever the *Wonderful*, dwelling in an abyss of mysterious radiance. It is sacrilege to attempt to make Him common, as hymn-writers do. Looking at the Psalms is like gazing upon a painting by one of the old masters. You can look forever and see new beauties, and you are inclined to cry out as Dante cried out when, in poetic vision, the glory of the Trinity was shewn to him, "O speech, how feeble and how faint thou art to give conception birth!" Turn to the hymns and you seem to be gazing at some daub, the poor details of which can be taken in at a glance.

And then the Psalms are a vehicle for conveying instruction. A number of them have the title, "Maschil," prefixed—that is, they are Psalms giving instruction. They teach lessons of

duty, lessons of patience and trust. The Book of Psalms has been well styled the "Bible of believing experience". The Psalms mirror the feelings and aspirations of the human heart in all circumstances. The jubilant notes of joy, the wail of sorrow, the strains of the battle shout, the pathetic words of penitence—every experience that we can think of finds expression in these Divine Songs. They verily hold the mirror up to Nature. They are, in the truest sense, didactic. They *teach*, and the instruction given in them abides. No one can estimate the value of home teaching. Long afterwards the holy influence will be felt. The young man may go away from home, and swerve from the paths of virtue; but the memory of a mother's prayer and a father's counsel will come up as a blessed interception between him and his sin. The teaching may be long dormant, but it will eventually bear fruit, and be the means, under God, of salvation. Many a time has it happened that the Psalms learned by a child at its mother's knee have deposited in the heart the seeds of Divine knowledge, which have been kept alive till they have sprung up long after in a bright harvest of salvation. The same might be said regarding the teaching of the Sabbath School. The Psalms learned there will remain as a purifying, ennobling influence afterwards, amid the bustle and turmoil of life, a solace when tired and weary with the march of life. Reading them, we take heart again. They are Songs of joy and victory as we trample our spiritual foes under our feet. They make this life worth living, banishing pessimistic thoughts; and when the shadows of evening fall, they cheer us as we pass into the light that knows no dimming. The songs of our childhood become the songs of our old age. They constitute the rod and the staff of the Good Shepherd, which comfort us as we walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Who will venture to say that uninspired hymns can do this? In the crises of human life, when we come to face the eternal verities, when the rider on the pale horse confronts us, nothing but the Psalms will satisfy our cravings. In our sorest need, anything else will be only a broken reed, whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it. These Psalms have been a perennial source of joy and comfort and strength to the saints in all ages. David sang them, and many a one since; yet has not their power to cheer in any way been diminished. Jerome mentions that he had learnt the Psalms when he was a child, and that he sang them constantly in his old age. Augustine says when the Spirit of Christ first began to move his heart, it was often by means of the Psalms. Referring to this period, he exclaims in his "Confessions"—"Oh, in what accents spake I to Thee, my

God, when I read the Psalms of David, those faithful songs and sound of devotion, which allow of no swelling spirit." In Jerome's case, and in the Bishop of Hippo's case, the Psalms were learned in childhood, and the holy influence remained. And so we might say in the case of everyone over whom these Divine Songs have exercised a holy influence in after years. The impressions of childhood *remain*. The teaching of the home and of the Sabbath School do not easily fade from the memory. When the inspired Psalms enter as an element in the formation of the character, the result will be seen in fairest lines of living. Amid the trials and viscissitudes of life, the Psalter will be a well-filled treasure house, out of which the soul can draw, a deep well of salvation, the living water of which will unfailingly refresh the spirit. As we sing these Songs, the weariness of the march of life will be relieved, the burden of work and anxiety will be lightened. These are the Songs of ascents by which the tribes of Israel cheer themselves as they go up to the celestial city. They are sung in the house of our pilgrimage; and surely when the Captain of our salvation leads His many sons, the sacramental host of God's elect, to glory, the triumphal procession will advance to the music of these Songs, a grander music than ever rolled up through the mighty cathedral dome. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

THE PSALMS AND THE SABBATH SCHOOL.*

By MR. ANDREW S. MILLER, Pittsburg, Pa., U.S.A.

The sentiment of the songs and the music in the Sabbath School should be lofty and inspiring.

It should not be the jingle and rhyme of passing sentiment. It depends much upon the character of the sacred music with which we are familiar in youth, what our ideas of praise will be when we are older. It is generally true that the charms of music begin the earliest and continue the longest. The songs sung by the mother or father in our childhood are among our earliest recollections, and continue with us long after the voice

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of the singer has been stilled forever in this world; and often, after the memory of other scenes and other days has faded from the mind, the songs of childhood are borne to us on the golden wings of memory across the years of the long ago; and of all sweet memories, the Psalms we learned in childhood are among the most lasting. The ballads and rhymes we then learned have long since been forgotten and faded from the mind; but these are a source of delight and comfort till the end of life. Music and the joyous outburst of the heart to God lie at the foundation of all acceptable worship. The history of God's people as far back as recorded time extends shows this. We hear the wild refrain of the song of Moses, as the children of Israel celebrated the crossing of the Red Sea, "I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously," and the response of Miriam and her choir of maidens, "Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea."

The children of Israel celebrated their victories in sacred song.

We hear Deborah and Barak chanting the Psalms as they recount the mercies of God to Israel.

For three thousand years David's harp has struck a responsive chord in the hearts of God's people, and his songs have been their comfort in all these generations, and as Tholuck has said, "Songs, which, like the Psalms, have stood the test of three thousand years, contain a germ for eternity."

All will agree that music and the matter of it hold an important place in public worship, and especially in the Sabbath School. Carlyle says, "Music brings us near to the infinite, we look for moments across the cloudy elements into the eternal light, when song leads and inspires us." Words and music, therefore, should breathe the spirit of devotion. This being true, what should be the character of praise to be used in the Sabbath School, in which we may most truly worship God? Shall it be the sentimental rhyme of the modern "Sunday School" hymns, or the stately and soul-satisfying music of the "Songs of the Ages"? Which of these brings nearer the infinite?

Robert Rule, in his little work on the Psalms, says, "The soul that longs to cry to Heaven, be it in praise, petition, or confession, finds words taken from the Psalms to articulate the cry more nearly as the language is felt, than any other words articulate it. The Psalms express the deepest needs of human nature without scarifying the needy soul with false sentiment, and as the fresh childhood of the world was the time for the production of the Psalms, so early years are the time to commit them to memory." How can the Psalms be

committed to memory better than by singing them, and where so appropriate a place to learn to sing them as in the Sabbath School?

The Psalms are adapted to the Sabbath School on account of their historical association.

The youthful mind loves to people the past with ideals. The young are hero worshippers, and as they become familiar with the Psalms, they can learn the history of God's dealings with the nations and peoples of the past ages, and how God led His people like a flock through all mutations of time and circumstance since the world began. They may learn how a vast number of heroes and heroines in the ages of the past, have lived, drawing daily strength from the Psalms, and died repeating some precious passage from them; how the Psalms have been sung by the people of God since the earliest recorded history. They may hear the voice of the pilgrim crying across the valley of Seir, "Watchman, what of the night?" and the answer coming back, "The morning cometh, and also the night;" or, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." They will see in the history of the Psalms, looking back through the half open doors of time, a vast orchestra of Levites ranged up and down the marble steps of the Temple on feast days at Jerusalem, with harps and psalteries, and all sorts of musical instruments, and hear them chanting in the songs of degrees, "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem," and then a mighty host of people in front of the Temple taking up the chorus and singing, the swell of the song rolling through the streets, over the walls, and across the Kidron, when it is taken up by the thousands of voices, which answer back with the Great Hosanna, "O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever."

We learn that our Saviour and His disciples sang a song, or songs, at the institution of the Lord's Supper, believed to be the Psalms used by the Jews in celebrating their Passover.

Paul and Silas sang songs of deliverance in prison; and we may believe that they were Psalms which they sung, because the Jews were taught in youth to commit the Psalms to memory. Kings and Queens and Emperors, and a vast host of earth's greatest ones, as well as those in obscure life, have died repeating some precious Psalm with their latest breath. Martyrs have gone to the stake or inquisition repeating Psalms, and rejoicing that they were found worthy to suffer for His name. Isabel Alison, who was executed as a martyr in Edinburgh, Scotland, on January 26, 1681, sang the 84th Psalm to the tune of "Martyrs" on her way to the scaffold.

Cromwell and his soldiers sang the 117th Psalm at the

battle of Dunbar, September 3, 1650. At the battle of Drumclog, in June, 1679, the Scotch soldiers used the 76th Psalm as a martial song. "As Claverhouse descended from the opposite side of the mountain, the women, children, and old men retired to the rising in the rear of our hosts. The aged men walked with their bonnets in their hands, and their grey locks waved in the breeze. They sang a cheering Psalm. The music was that of the well-known tune of 'Martyrs,' and the sentiment breathed defiance. The music floated down on the wind. Our men gave three cheers as they fell into rank. As they marched out the army sang the following verses of a Psalm :—

'There arrows of the bow He brake,
The shield, the sword, the war.
More glorious Thou than hills of prey,
More excellent art far.

Those that were stout of heart are spoil'd,
They slept their sleep outright;
And none of those their hands did find,
That were the men of might.'"

The Catacombs of Rome have echoed to the Psalms of David; the Waldenses in their mountain retreats have lifted their hearts to God in Psalms; the Covenanters on the moors of Scotland and the braes of Ireland sung them; and a mighty company of godly men and women in all ages of the world, have voiced their prayers in Psalms. From millions of homes all over the earth where the names of Homer and Virgil and the great poets of antiquity have never been known, has gone up the sweet music of David's hallowed melodies. "Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," does it not bring us nearer our Father's home, to know that we are in sentiment and practice with these His children, who have gone on before.

True worship calls for praise and adoration.

The Psalms are the best songs in which to express the adoration of the singer.

How many of the hymns in use in the Sabbath School breathe the spirit of adoration? Jonathan Edwards says, "Those holy songs [the Psalms] are nothing else than the expressions and breathings of devout and holy affections, such as an humble and fervent love to God, admiration of His glorious perfection and wonderful works, earnest desires, thirstings and pantings of soul after Him, and these ex-

pressions of holy affection of which the Psalms of David are everywhere full, are the more to our present purpose, not only because they are expressions of so eminent a saint, but because they are, by the direction of the Holy Spirit, permitted for the use of the Church not only in that age, but in after ages."

What songs express so well the adoration of the young (or old) to God for His majesty and power in creation as it is expressed in the 19th Psalm, when the shepherd boy upon the plains of Bethlehem, perhaps, in the freshness of the morning, looking upon the sun, the herald of God's glory, rising over the mountains, and which, with silent speech, is declaring His goodness to all lands, breaks forth into praise.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard."

Take also the 8th Psalm, which might be called a companion piece to the 19th Psalm. The latter was the Psalmist's impression of the day, the former of the night. David watching over his flock by night, probably alone so far as human help was concerned, the stillness of the night, the flocks asleep, the song of the birds stilled, and all animate nature resting, the great arch of the heavens stretching over him, studded with its glittering galaxy of heavenly bodies—all these contributed to a deep sense of the greatness of God's power and majesty, which took possession of him, and he gave expression to the beautiful sentiments of the 8th Psalm, which is expressed in poetic form in our United Presbyterian version, as follows:—

"Lord, our Lord, o'er earth's vast frame,
How exalted is Thy name!
Who hast set Thy glory bright
Far above the heaven's height.

When Thy heavens I survey,
Which Thy fingers' work display,
When the moon and stars I see
Ordered all by Thy decree."

Then the immensity of God's greatness so impressed itself upon his mind that he could not but contrast the difference between the Infinite One, Who made all these, and the insignificance of men; and he wonders why the great God Who

made all these mighty systems and keeps them in motion should think of him.

"What is man that in Thy mind
He a constant place should find?
What the son of man that he
Should be visited by Thee?"

And yet Thou hast made him to have dominion over

"Every living thing that strays
Through the ocean's secret ways.
Lord, our Lord, o'er earth's vast frame,
How exalted is Thy name!"

The child who has been trained to sing these inspired sentiments must have a loftier conception of God's majesty and goodness than the finest uninspired songs can give.

Another element in Sabbath School worship should be thanksgiving.

"O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." The superiority of the Psalms over uninspired songs used in the Sabbath School is manifest. In the latter, songs of thanksgiving and rejoicing for blessings received are not abundant. An eminent writer, a hymn-singer, says, "There are a goodly number of songs in most of the tune books which approach the spirit of thanksgiving, but they are most generally songs, telling the Lord how we feel and what we think, or they are directed to the assembly in the form of personal experience." What can compare with the 103rd Psalm in expressing our thankfulness to God?

"Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name . . . Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; Who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies."

Another element in Sabbath School worship is petition.

Prayer must always have a place in worship, and there is a natural place in the musical part of the service that must be filled by the song of petition.

We are brought "Nearer to the great white throne, nearer the crystal sea," "Nearer to the Infinite," when our voices and hearts unite in a song of petition inspired by the Holy Spirit to the God of love for deliverance from trouble, for

divine favour, for pardon, or for grace to live obedient to His will.

Probably the 51st Psalm has been used by God's children oftener to express the cry of the penitent soul than all the hymns ever written. It expresses acknowledgment of sin and longing for pardon—in fact, the soul is here laid bare before God. Relying on "the loving-kindness of the Lord", and the "multitude of His mercies". The Psalmist cries, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." The children are here taught the pardoning grace of God, and likewise the antecedent duty of penitence for sin.

The Psalms tend to awaken a spirit of devotion in and deepen the spiritual life of the Sabbath School. The children should be taught to sing songs that are dignified and truly devotional; and they do sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also, the songs of Zion.

The Jews taught the Psalms to their children from earliest infancy. They were trained on the Psalms. They learned them at their mother's knee. When Christ came into the Temple the little ones sang, "Hosanna to the Son of David" (Matthew 21, 15). "Did ye never read," said the Divine One, Who took the little children in His arms and blessed them, "Did ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?" (Matthew 21, 16). When God was training the nation for Himself, out of which the Redeemer should come, He trained them on the Psalms. The Psalms are God's nutriment for the child.

The music of the Psalms should be adapted to children's voices. The words reach the heart oftentimes through some catchy strain of music, and remain there to do service in the formation of character. We catch the child heart through eye-gate and ear-gate. The little ones love to sing. Their bright young lives are full of music. Now, the song for the child is God's Song. God gave the child to the Sabbath School, and He gave the Psalms to the Sabbath School. The child and the Psalms should not be separated. Their pathos, their imagery, their wonderful history, make them fascinating to the imaginative child mind.

The teacher, or better, the superintendent, could in a few simple words tell the children a little about the origin or history of the Psalm they were about to sing, or give some striking incident concerning it. An interest would thus be aroused, and the children would be drawn to it. Tell them about trees growing "by the rivers of waters" (1st Psalm), or of the poet walking alone in the moonlight and admiring God in the stars (8th Psalm), or of the flock of sheep lying down to rest in the meadows, and the shepherd with his hooked stick sitting

beside them (23rd Psalm), or of the swallows building their nests under the eaves of the barn (84th Psalm). What child does not love to watch the swallows? or the big floods rushing down the valley and making a mighty noise (93rd Psalm)? Any circumstances connected with the Psalm to make it more vivid and fix it in the mind should be given. We make far too little of our Psalms in the Sabbath School. We should take them up more than we do. Tell the children occasionally an incident like this one which I heard recently:—Away back in the days of the great rebellion in the United States, a young man enlisted in the 126th Ohio Volunteers. He was a brave man; and he did not forget to write home to his father and mother. But one day there was fought a great battle in the wilderness, I believe, on 6th May, 1864. His father and mother never heard from him again. They wrote letters but they could get no information. Years rolled away but he never came home. A few years ago a cousin of the missing soldier was talking to General Gordon of Georgia, and asked if he had ever heard of this missing soldier boy. General Gordon sent the question to an Atlantic Journal, which published it. Not long after that he received a letter from a man who had been in the Confederate army, and had been wounded in the "Battle of the Wilderness". He said that while in the field hospital, a young wounded Union soldier was brought in and laid beside him. Both were expecting death. The Union soldier took a Psalm-book from his pocket, which was all stained with blood from his wound. This Psalm-book was a great comfort to the two wounded soldiers—once enemies, now friends—who expected soon to die. The Union soldier died, leaving the precious book to his Confederate comrade in sorrow, who finally recovered. He has the book still, and on looking into it when he saw General Gordon's question published, he saw on the fly-leaf the name of the man about whose fate his family knew nothing; but they now know the time and place of his death. The finding of the blood-stained Psalm-book was a great comfort to the parents. It showed how their son loved the Psalms, and how the Psalms comforted him in his dying hour. And they always will be a comfort to the boy or girl who loves them, and a help to them on the bed of death. And thus every day some practical lesson could be drawn, or some interesting fact fixed in the mind.

Every superintendent should make a study of the Psalms in their historical, if not exegetical, relations, with special reference to making them interesting to the school, showing the children what a wonderful storehouse they are. They could be made to sparkle like mines of diamonds, or the crown jewels on the brow of the good queen Alexandra. It would be

shown that "in keeping of them there is great reward". If we awaken in the minds of the children a love for the Psalms, they will stand by the Psalter to the end, and God will be glorified, and hereafter they will shine "as the stars for ever and ever".

For three thousand years the dust has settled on the strings of David's harp, and they have ceased to vibrate responsive to the touch of the sacred minstrel.

Many generations of men have come and gone since God's volume of matchless Songs was completed. Since that time nations and empires have been born, have risen and flourished and passed away; and yet these precious Songs still live, as dear to the hearts of God's people as when first uttered, just because they are the Songs of the Holy Spirit.

DISCUSSION.

Mr. W. J. Milliken said—Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to occupy the time of the meeting more than a few minutes, but I will take the liberty to say a few things in regard to my experience as a Sabbath School teacher—a few things of rather a practical character that have occurred within a lifetime of sixty years engaged in Sabbath School work. You may think it rather strange when I tell you that I am at present engaged in the teaching of infants from three years old to six, children who cannot read, and, therefore, all the instruction must be communicated to them orally, or you must make certain statements, put questions, and obtain from them that which you have endeavoured to communicate. It has been repeatedly said that in the communication of instruction to children you cannot use the Psalms. I thought it would be well to have introduced into the minds of the children a few Psalms. I will tell you my success in eight months, and the method of instruction which I adopted. I made it a point to go to the parents. I tabulated the lessons for the three months. I said to the parents—I want now to assist you in communicating a little instruction to your own children. I am willing to help you a little, and I want you to take the lead and assist me in the preparation of the things that I have laid down, tabulated in this little card, so that there will be no difficulty whatever in my endeavour to communicate to the children the instruction I want to give. The

result is this—in eight months my children are all able to repeat the 1st Psalm; the 4th Psalm, four stanzas; the 8th Psalm, the entire of it; the 15th Psalm, four stanzas; the 23rd Psalm, the entire of it; the 32nd Psalm, which is pretty long, the whole of it; the 40th Psalm, four stanzas; the 46th Psalm, four stanzas; the 136th Psalm, the whole of it. Of course, you will understand that while they are being taught to commit these to memory, I have an opportunity of asking questions and making remarks upon anything that is stated in the Psalms. I say this by way of encouragement to those who tell us that the Psalms are insufficient for the Sabbath School.

Mr. R. J. Graham, Coleraine, Ireland, said—There is a matter that has not been dealt with, about which I should like to say a word or two, and that is, the attention that should be given to the singing in the Sabbath School. In my experience of Sabbath Schools, the leading of the singing is left to this one and that one, and the scholars do not get a chance of joining in the tune at all. I am of opinion that the best plan would be to get all the Sabbath School children together, and the precentor, or whoever is in charge of the praise in the congregation, to lead the singing in the Sabbath School. My experience is that the young people are not trained in the Service of Praise as they should be. If the young people received more attention, and got better training than what they do, I think there would be little trouble about the hymns; but there is little attention given to the singing, and the result is that when the children hear the hymns they can catch them far better. For instance, if there was a weekly practice at which two or three tunes would be thoroughly practised for the Psalms to be sung at the service on the next Lord's Day, and again sung in the Sabbath School, we should shortly have a great change in our singing, and to my mind, there would be no desire for hymns to be introduced into the Service of Praise. I think there should be far more attention paid to the singing in the Sabbath School.

Rev. Samuel Lyle Orr, Monaghan, Ireland, said—I was glad to hear my friend, Mr. Graham, state what he did with regard to the singing in the Sabbath School. In my Sabbath School, first there is a school for the grown-up ones, and then there is the infant school, which has an attendance of eighty. My precentor is teacher of the infant school, and he goes to the trouble, in order to get the Psalms into the minds of the children, of getting a long roll of calico, of printing the tune at the top of this, and then the words of the Psalm underneath. For the children are all under twelve years of age.

First they learn the Psalm simultaneously, then they learn the tune, and then practise both again and again, until they have the Psalm and its music perfect; and we never depart from that tune when we go into the congregation on the Sabbath. Now, he has over a dozen of these Psalms and tunes on rolls, and they are taken down in their turn. When one Psalm is mastered, another is taken. These are gone over again and again from time to time. Then through the week there is a singing class for children, at which one hundred attend, and out of these we select boys and girls with the best musical talents, and we pay particular attention to them, and they are the backbone of the singing in the congregation. I think the practical side might be attended to with a little more zeal and constancy. Get the children to know the Psalms and to sing the Psalms; and then do not go here and there for tunes, but keep Psalm and tune together, and then you will have good singing, and the whole matter of both Psalm and tune will recommend itself to the old people as well as to the children.

Mr. J. A. Chancellor, B.A., Belfast, Ireland, said—I wish to say a word or two in connection with this matter, because, I think one important cause why our children do not learn the Psalms, and do not love to sing them, is that there is not enough attention paid to the singing in our Sabbath Schools. Many tell us that it is quite impossible to carry on mission work, or a mission Sabbath School, and stick to the Psalms. I think experience has taught us that it can be done. I think, especially in infant classes, the scholars should be made to repeat and learn the Psalms, and that a tune should be selected for each Psalm—a tune in which the children will have an interest—as bright as possible. Let the children assemble in the afternoon along with the advanced scholars, and join in the opening and closing of the school. I think, also, in advanced classes, where children have sometimes no encouragement to learn, that the teacher would very properly spare some time in teaching the scholars in the class the words of the Psalm. I think the superintendent and officers should try, in the opening and closing exercises, to select Psalms that are being learned, and have a tune fixed to each Psalm. It does pain one terribly to go into a mission service and hear a hymn such as "Onward, Christian soldiers" sung so heartily by the children, while in our Sabbath Schools so many scholars will stand with their mouths closed. I think we want to get bright tunes and have the children trained properly in the singing of those tunes, and Psalms in the Sabbath School. Some little time ago I remember the child-

ren of our *school had an outing in the country. When they were coming home, the people of Belfast had a unique opportunity of hearing them singing through the streets from the top of tramcars, not what one might expect—hymns or catch songs, but the Psalms of David. It was a fine testimony from those children in favour of the Psalms. I think if we want to swamp the hymns, we must try to give attention to this matter of singing and learning of Psalms in the Sabbath School.

THE PSALMS EVER AN UNFATHOMABLE MINE OF POETIC GENIUS AND SAVING KNOWLEDGE.

By REV. JOHN KINNEAR, D.D., Letterkenny, Ireland.

I hope to abide by this subject, and to refrain from infringing on the themes so fully analysed and enforced by able and distinguished brethren around me, or that may yet be so enforced. One of my main objects is to place on record my own experience of the Psalms, and to trace that experience back in the past sixty years, in its inception and gradual augmentation, till it has become to me an anthology of sacred song, for centuries in use by the Jews, and still suitable for the worship of God and the instruction and service of man. I feel towards the Psalms as did Laban towards the Patriarch, when he urged him, saying, "tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake." Conscience and experience plead with me to tarry by the Psalms, convinced as I am, the Lord has made them a perennial fountain of blessings to mine own soul. Profitably have they and I proceeded together in the journey of life—they teaching in their multitudinous prayers and thanksgivings and in the tones of penitential pathos and triumphs, and I cherishing their fruitful and abiding lessons of spiritual and saving truth. And while I present myself here, and utter my well known sentiments, it is in no spirit of egotism, nor are my opinions to be decried as mere egoism. Both these emotions I dislike, and now, as ever, speak forth the words of truth and soberness; and like the Psalmist, in handling these Psalms, I feel I am treating of great and glorious things, and

* Reformed Presbyterian Congregation, College Street South, Belfast, Ireland.

with a heart boiling over, bubbling up, as the word is, with a good matter in things touching the King. Thus are the faithful brought to learn the majesty, extent, wealth of Christ's Kingdom, and to see there is no felicity greater or more desirable than to live under the reign of Christ our King, and in subjection to His benign dominion. Knowing these Psalms and following their instruction, we shall know of the doctrine, and, like Solomon, know this is the knowledge that increaseth strength.

It is now many years since I began to explore this remarkable Psalmodic collection. Soon its plenitude became to me apparent—so full that one fancied the highest personal communion with God would never exhaust that fulness, nor weary of its influence. Ere long and they became my guide in religious emotions, in thought and conception, and in every form of sanctified obedience; and in all my later days I turned to them as my rule of life and standard of feeling. Being a son of the manse, I was early trained in a capacity for understanding them. Instucted as I was by my father, a minister of the Presbyterian Church, himself a thorough Hebrew and Greek and Latin scholar, and led by him in all these originals over the recorded revelations of God, I look back now with a happy and grateful feeling on those boyhood days, and on my scholastic work under a father's eye. I well remember how, on the Sabbath evenings, I had to read the Greek or the Hebrew chapter containing the text of that Sabbath, my daily Psalm, and the portion of the Psalm for grammatical criticising. This was steadily persisted in for some years till the Church removed me to my sphere of labour in the interior of Donegal. And since, and up till the present, I read in the originals my Psalm and other chapters—a work still to me very congenial, and which I cannot, even for a day, without regret, either postpone or neglect. To this early training, under watchful paternal attention, is traceable my quenchless love for these Psalms of the Lord, those Praises of Israel in the Sanctuary Service. In my after life that love has developed itself in very peculiar but winning forms. For almost half a century I have been adding to my stores of prose expositions, until these books are so multiplied as to reach almost a thousand. *Pari passu*, I have been collecting metrical versions until these also have been multiplied similarly in abundance; and these collections are prized by me, not only for their abundance and variety, and even curiosity, but for their exhibiting that combined individuality and universality which, to the sound philologist, is one of their well-known features. The mere title pages of those prose expositions, and those poetic versions, would, if uniformly

assorted, form a large and thick volume, and be a wondrous attestation to the universal love of humanity for the Psalms—an affection stretching back over almost the whole Christian era. My labours in those collections have extended over half a century, limited as they have been to the Psalmists of the British Empire. At times those labours were carried on by epistolary correspondence, and often by personally exploring among shelves and piles of "dear delightful dirty books". My catalogue of poets who have versified the Sepher Tehillim, the book of Praises of Israel, numbers almost one thousand, so that, as the Spirit promoted reformation work, He brought the children of Zion increasingly trooping forward, daily refreshing humanity at the fountain of the Psalms.

Of the	14th	century	I have 2	versions,
,,	15th	,,	,, 3	,,
,,	16th	,,	,, 81	,,
,,	17th	,,	,, 252	,,
,,	18th	,,	,, 274	,,
,,	19th	,,	,, 332	,,

And all these versions are by English versifiers, though I have the Psalms poetized in Welsh, Gaelic, and some Continental languages. Some of these I discovered while exploring in the Harlean collection in the British Museum, others in the Lambeth Archiepiscopal Library, London, and a few in the Library of the House of Commons. But wheresoever found, welcome were they to a location on the shelves of my own home library. And these poetizers were not confined to the humble, intellectual, or social ranks of the land. King James I., Queen Elizabeth, Earls of England, and titled ladies not a few, noblemen in the Courts of Henry VIII. and Edward VI., ministers of the Gospel and others of profound scholastic attainments and eminent for piety and knowledge of the ways and Word of God—such as these contributed to the poetic praises of Israel. Calmet reckons that in his day more than a thousand commentators laboured in expounding the Psalms. History tells of a version published in Geneva amidst the hottest fires of the Marian persecution, passing through 309 distinct editions. We have copies of the French version of Clement Marot, consecrated a thousand times by the Huguenots, who baptized it by their tears, laid it up in their memories, sang it in their mountain sanctuaries, and chanted its strains as their arousing battle cry. Also of the version of Miles Coverdale, faithful alike in spirit and expression. But these editions are very numerous, and in the progress of ages, old versions lingered on, tarrying

in the memories of the faithful, the Spirit by them winnowing desires, chastening longings, intensifying hopes and triumphs and spiritual gladness. It is in no *longo intervallo* path that we approach, in this 20th century, with almost as numerous a battalion of Psalmodic versifiers; and in many of the versions the philologist will find gems of the very rarest lustre. The Psalms are stamped with the autograph of God. By Divine institution the Psalmody of the Church is fixed. There should be now no ransacking of the poetic world for what erratic humanity may fancy suitable to the Praise Worship of God, no descending into the purlieus of will-worship, no abandoning of that which the Sovereign Jehovah has Himself so highly honoured and so authoritatively commanded. Our Lord has classified the Psalms with the writings of Moses and the Prophets. They speak of the Lord's Anointed. They reveal the working of the Spirit. Many of them are Messianic and teach the genuine Sonship of our Lord, and hence we hold them to pertain to our own Gospel times, and the experience of saints in all ages homologates the conviction. As to myself I have at all times exclusively used the Psalms of the Lord in the Praise Service of the Sanctuary, and I never experienced difficulty in finding a Psalm suitable for my pulpit theme. There is no mood of a truly religious soul in which the Spirit will fail in finding a Psalm to guide and comfort. And when we think on the multitudes of their versifiers and commentators, exceeding as they do anything the world can present on any theme pertaining to this earth, we ask, why this? Why the incomparable throngs of minds, in all ages, in enlightening contact with the Psalms of Zion? Is it not to demonstrate that these Psalms are designed for refreshing with the waters of life, so long as sun and moon shall endure, the vast myriads, soaring as doves to their windows, from all nations and kindreds and tongues and peoples. And though our Psalmodic poets be at times rugged, even harsh, and though they take liberty, even with poetic license, perhaps transgressing the limit exact Hebrew dialectics will allow, yet we who can approvingly look upon Tudor architecture, ever appearing more quaint than graceful, will readily own those Psalmodists to be deserving of the Church's gratitude and esteem. They prepared the versions our fathers used in distant days, and have taught us to venerate the Psalms with enduring veneration; and when the Church shall be so humbled as to think upon her former ways, and well to try her life, then shall she retrace her steps, and turn her feet to the pure testimonies of the Lord, led by the Spirit back again into His own grand central theme—God and the human soul;

and with mourning and weeping shall she come, yet in the joy of confidence, singing as she comes—

"So henceforth we will not go back,
Nor turn from Thee at all:
O do Thou quicken us, and we
Upon Thy name will call."

PRAISE—Psalm 119, 129-133. BENEDICTION.

FRIDAY, 8th AUGUST.

EVENING MEETING, from 7-30 to 10 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN:—

REV. THOMAS THOMPSON, Glendermot, Londonderry, Ireland.

PRAISE—Psalm 22, 27-31.

Rev. J. M'C. Cromie, Kilraughts, Ballymoney, Ireland, led in prayer.

Chairman's Address:—

Fellow Christians, I take the chair to-night as you will see from the programme to fill a gap, and I do so on the understanding that I am not to make a long speech. Permit me to say that I am in entire sympathy with this Psalm-singers' Conference. I heard a man saying not long ago, when accused of singing hymns in the Praise Worship of God at a seaside resort, "No, I did nothing of the kind; I have been singing Psalms since I was born." I cannot say, as has been said by some of the members of this Conference, that I have been singing Psalms as long as I remember. I was brought up in a country congregation under one, possibly, of the ablest ministers of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland in his day; and he gave us a Paraphrase every Lord's day. But I have been singing Psalms, and Psalms exclusively, in the worship of God since I became a Licentiate. My conversion, if I may speak of it in that way, happened thus: a good man, long since gone to his rest, said to me in my last session at college and to others, "Gentlemen, you will be Licentiates in a month or two, and if you take my advice, when preaching in a vacancy, you will never give out

a Paraphrase. If you do, you will wound the conscience of some good man in the congregation, and if you preach like the Apostle Paul you may not get the congregation." I at once said to myself, if it is wrong for me to wound the conscience of a good man before I become a minister, it would surely be wrong for me to wound the conscience of a good man when I have entered the ministry. I am, therefore, as you will see, a Psalm-singer on the principle laid down by the Apostle in the Epistle to the Romans, 14th chapter, 19th verse, "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another;" and also in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, 8th chapter and 13th verse, "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." This, I think, is a good principle; and I wish that all the ministers in the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland understood it as I have understood it, and acted upon it as I have acted upon it. I, however, have long since passed beyond that principle, having made a careful study of the subject; and from that study I believe that uninspired hymns were never appointed by the Divine Being for any part of the Praise Worship of the Church; and I believe also that we are not permitted to worship God in any way not appointed in His Word, or not appointed by Himself. I came to the conclusion that it would be wrong for me to present anything to the Divine Being in the Praise Worship in the Sanctuary except the Divinely inspired and Divinely appointed Book of Psalms. Let me say, in conclusion, that there are not a few in this city who do not agree with the principle that we hold to be the guiding principle in the Praise Worship of the Sanctuary. Some of these have been present at our meetings, and we were greatly pleased to see them. We hope we have done them good. Most of them, if not all, are very friendly to us as individuals, and we cordially reciprocate their kindly feelings; and to show that we do, we say to them, in the language of Moses to his father-in-law, Come with us, and we will do you good.

THE PSALM-SINGING CHURCHES OF TO-DAY; THEIR ORIGIN, CHARACTERISTICS, AND WORK.*

By REV. J. W. S. LOWRY, Clarinda, Iowa, U.S.A.

That branch of the great Presbyterian brotherhood adhering to the use of the Scripture Psalms as the subject-matter of Divine Praise, which has the largest following, is the United Presbyterian Church of North America, commonly and favourably known as "the largest Psalm-singing branch of the Bride of Christ". As now constituted it was formed in 1858 by a union of the Associate and Associate Reformed Presbyterian Churches of the New World, and has since grown to be a large and influential body of Christians. This body consists of 13 synods, 68 presbyteries, 1,020 ministers, 3,962 ruling elders, 88 licentiates, 67 theological students, 1,019 congregations, 637 mission stations, 134,260 communicants, 1,226 Sabbath schools, with 13,500 officers and teachers, upwards of 120,000 scholars, 1,036 young people's societies, with almost 40,000 members, and 983 congregational women's missionary societies. The contributions of this Church last year amounted in all to 1,874,514 dollars, the average contribution per member in America being $15·87. The entire Church numbers about a quarter of a million souls.

A distinctive feature of this United Presbyterian Church is that it adheres in *all* its devotional exercises to the inspired Psalter as the only and Divinely authorized manual of Song-worship, and "it is widely known as the leading exponent of Psalm-singing Presbyterianism". "Standing on the threshold of the twentieth century," says Professor M'Naugher, D.D., "it faces an outlook rich in promise." "It abides zealous for vital godliness, and an active, aggressive Christianity." It is further distinguished by "its insistence upon the plenary, verbal inspiration of God's written Word; it contends for the absolute integrity and accuracy of the Bible, and accounts the theories about the origin of its books, which are now current in most of the Churches, as fatal to its authority".

This Church also stands for a fuller recognition of the Headship of Christ in the Church, and "for His coronation as the Ruler of nations". Moreover, in common with brethren of the Covenanting Presbyterian bodies, she proclaims the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ in matters of civil government, and "pleads for the settlement of all moral

* Read by Rev. Samuel Graham, Moira, Ireland.

questions in national and political life by His revealed will". The enthronement of Jesus Christ "over all, God blessed forever", is, therefore, a watchword with this branch of the Redeemer's kingdom.

In addition to aggressive and fruitful home missionary effort in the rural districts, and in the towns and among the teeming millions of the great cities, also with the freedmen of the sunny south land, she carries on extensive missionary operations in Egypt and India, which have been signally blessed, and through which thousands have been brought from the darkness of heathenism into the light and liberty of the children of God.

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod of the South, which celebrates its centenary next year, is found operating its earnest work in twelve of the southern states of the great Republic of the west. It numbers in all 11 presbyteries, 113 ministers, 4 female missionaries, upwards of 12,000 communicants, 136 congregations and 16 mission stations, 1,087 Sabbath school workers, and nearly 9,000 scholars. The total contributions of this Church last year amounted to 73,500 dollars. A friendly courtship, giving promise of an early marriage, has been going on between this faithful little sister and the great United Presbyterian Church, for several years. Meanwhile, the latter is assisting its southern companion in its works of faith and labours of love, and it is our earnest desire and prayer that these two bodies of Psalm-singing brethren may soon join hands never to be separated.

The third of the Psalm-singing Churches in America is the Holland Christian Reformed Synod, which carries on a vigorous and interesting work of shepherding and evangelizing among the people of its own race and language that have found homes in the Western World. It consists of 11,020 families, 18,877 members, nearly 60,000 souls, embraced in 146 congregations, and having 101 ministers. This body is one of the most conservative in faith and worship, and maintains with unswerving fidelity the Reformation truths, bequeathed to it by an honoured ancestry in the fatherland. With this company of the Lord's people also, the United Presbyterian Church has maintained friendly relations for many years, and the matter of organic union is being discussed and considered. May the Lord of the Church graciously grant that this trio of Psalm-singing Churches will soon present an unbroken front to the world, and richly experience the truth they often sing—

"Behold, how good a thing it is,
And how becoming well,
Together such as brethren are
In unity to dwell!"

The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (Old School) is a faithful and energetic body of Psalm-singers. It is distinguished for loyalty to God's Word, aggressive missionary spirit, an earnestness in the promotion of pure and undefiled religion among the people, a commendable and fruitful effort in the work of moral and national reform, and a fearless loyalty to the crown rights of our adorable Redeemer as King of kings and Lord of lords. It comprises 115 different congregations, 126 ministers, and a membership of about 10,000. In addition to general home mission work, this brave little Church has foreign missions in Syria, Asia-Minor, Cyprus, and China, which have already accomplished much for the onward march of Christian civilization in those "dark places of the earth", which are "full of the habitations of cruelty". The contributions of this sturdy branch of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, for the last ecclesiastical year, amounted to nearly 170,000 dollars, manifesting a high degree of Christian liberality in proportion to its numbers. This Church includes within its pale many leading educationists, theologians, and reformers who have made an impress upon the age in which they live, and have helped to raise the standard of the spiritual life.

The General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (New School) represents those Covenanters, who, while "protesting against civil governments which do not recognize the Headship of Christ", allows its members liberty to exercise the elective franchise, from which the main body of Covenanters conscientiously abstains. This body is scattered over nine different states of the Union, and has a total membership of nearly 5,000. One of its ministers, and its delegate-elect to this Conference, Rev. James D. Steele, Ph.D., of New York City, is the painstaking secretary of the Twentieth Century Inter-denominational Psalm Revision Committee, which represents eight or nine Presbyterian bodies on the North American Continent. This body of Reformed Presbyterians, though "one of the small tribes in Israel", is, nevertheless, alive to the spiritual needs of our time, and has lately taken a forward step in the direction of the organic unity of the separated forces of the Presbyterian brotherhood. This General Synod, at its last annual meeting in Philadelphia, passed the following:—"Believing it to be in accord with

our Master's intercessory prayer for the unity of His disciples, and believing it our duty at the opening of the twentieth century to strive in every laudable way for at least Presbyterian unity—Resolved, That this General Synod appoint a committee of five to confer with any similar committee appointed by bodies represented in the Alliance of Evangelical Churches, touching the important matter of close co-operation or unity of organization among Presbyterian Churches in the United States." This committee is to report at the next meeting of Synod. May this move be a precursor of the time when "one Lord, one faith, one baptism", and one Psalmody—"the Songs of Zion"—shall have universal dominion! "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."

"The Lord doth build Jerusalem;
And He it is alone
That the dispersed of Israel
Doth gather into one."

The Associate Presbyterian, or Seceder, Church of North America, represents those who did not enter the Union of 1858, when the great majority united with the Associate Reformed Church, forming the United Presbyterian General Assembly. It is now the smallest of the six exclusively Psalm-singing bodies in the United States. It has 31 congregations, 13 ministers, 63 elders, and about 1,000 communicants. Its contributions for all purposes last year, excepting congregational expenses, building and repairs, &c., amounted to upwards of 9,000 dollars. This body is found in eight States of the American Union, and is unflinchingly devoted to the principle and observance of a Divinely-authorized Psalmody.

The census returns report also four congregations, known corporately as the Reformed Presbyterian (Covenanted) Church, numbering in all about two hundred souls, and another called the Reformed Presbyterian Presbytery of the United States and Canada, numbering only three or four congregations, with but two ministers and eight hundred communicants. These are recent secessions, the one from the Synod, the other from the General Synod, of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Both these Churches adhere strictly to the Bible Psalms in the public and private exercises of God's worship.

All these Psalm-singing bodies in America are strict

adherents to the old Calvinistic theology, and testify against immoral oath-bound secrecy, whether organized for political or benevolent purposes, and fraternal organizations whose religious rituals "foster a belief in the salvability of men without the mediation of a Redeemer". They heartily "condemn all such organizations as most dishonouring to our Lord", and injurious to the souls of men, and solemnly declare that "members of the Church ought not to have fellowship with such associations".

Turning now to the fatherland of Presbyterianism, we find in Scotland several bodies of Presbyterian Psalm-singers, lifting up a standard for the people against the scepticism and sacerdotalism that seem to be eating like a canker into the life blood of the two large Churches of the land of the heather. Speaking of Great Britian in this connection at this time, and remembering the splendid traditions for fealty to God's everlasting truth, which are her heritage, we are ready to ask—Has the glory departed from the country of the Covenanters? Must we here write "Ichabod", and pass on? But, whilst there is much to deplore and lament, let us rejoice that Scotland has still a witnessing remnant "loyal to the faith once delivered unto the saints", and "true to the Reformation principles of our forefathers, in doctrine, government, and worship". The old Free Church of Scotland, which still adheres to an authorized Psalmody, though greatly reduced by the late premature union of the bulk of its ministers and people with the United Presbyterian Church, is still active and earnest, and is seeking for union with the Free Presbyterians, a smaller body of a kindred faith and worship. That this solicitude may develop into a happy union in the near future is our earnest prayer.

The United Original Secession Synod of Scotland has maintained the grand old Scriptural and true Presbyterian principles and order of the historic Erskine Secession of 1732-3. This body with its thirty congregations is prosecuting an agressive and fruitful work, and is also giving earnest attention to home and foreign mission enterprise in which fields it has realized considerable success. Its total receipts for the last church year amounted to £4,456 2s 3d, as against £2,238 3s 8½d for the year preceding, being an advance of about one hundred per cent. The able ministry and devoted people of this little Church in the fatherland are deeply and sincerely attached to inspired Psalmody, and are bearing a courageous testimony against the evils that are dominating their native land to-day.

The Reformed Presbyterian Synod of Scotland, though smaller than the American or Irish bodies of the same designation and principles, is, nevertheless, a very consistent and faithful body of loyal Covenanters, and stands firm as a rock for the great principle of a Scriptural and God-appointed Psalmody. Its ministry is able and efficient, and its people firm and true. God has a work for this noble body of His believing, worshipping, following people, to carry forward amidst the urgent needs of Scotland to-day. May the Head of the Church use it to bring about a speedy and widespread revival of Scotland's Covenanted Reformation! This ancient Church has preserved an unbroken succession since 1688, despite many tempting overtures to compromise its position. It now numbers twelve congregations, nine ministers, and a membership of about twelve hundred.

Crossing the channel to the Emerald Isle, we find the banners of the Reformed Presbyterian Church waving high over the far renowned northern province of Ulster. Here the Covenanting Church was planted in 1761, and has ever since maintained a faithful testimony for the truth as it is in Jesus. Its loyalty to an authorized Psalmody is strong and deep, and its ministers and people are distinguished for richness in faith and good works. The Synod is divided into 4 presbyteries, with 35 congregations, 30 ministers, 153 ruling elders, 1,711 families, and nearly 4,000 members. It has a band of over 200 Sabbath School workers and nearly 2,000 scholars. This Church is a model in providing commodious houses of worship, and comfortable manses for its ministers. It contributes a vigorous share to home, colonial, and foreign mission work, and its givings to the Lord's work are commendably liberal. Its total contributions for last year amounted to £11,340 9s 5d.

The Eastern Reformed Presbyterian Synod of Ireland corresponds to the Synod of the New Light Covenanters in America, differing from the larger body on similar lines. This little Synod, in an unpretentious way, has, for sixty years, borne a fearless testimony for the Scriptural principles of our holy religion, and embraces within its fold some of the excellent of the earth. It is divided into two presbyteries, with five congregations, five ministers, and a membership of about four hundred and fifty-two.

The Presbyterian Secession Synod of Ireland represents that part of the Seceding Body which declined to enter the union of 1840, with the General Synod of Ulster, forming the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Though a small band of the faithful, it stands undismayed

by the surrounding degeneracy, and loyally adheres to Scripture rule and precedent in matters of doctrine and worship. Its ministers are worthily distinguished for their proclamation of a simple gospel and an unswerving allegiance to the Reformation and Puritan principles of our martyred fathers. This body of Seceders has always used the inspired melodies of the centuries in the Praise Worship of its congregations to the exclusion of all unauthorized compositions. It numbers at this date ten congregations and about one thousand communicants. During the long dark reign of Arianism and scepticism, which obtained in Ireland towards the close of the eighteenth and during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the Seceders and Covenanters exercised a wholesome influence in favour of evangelical religion. "They constituted," says Rev. Alexander M'Creery, D.D., "a breakwater against the advancing tide of Socinianism and Arianism, which threatened to overflow and engulf the Protestant Churches of the land."

There are a great many other congregations of Psalm-singers in Ireland, within the larger Presbyterian Church of that country, which body, until five years ago, recognized and authorized no Psalmody but the inspired Psalms. It must be recorded, however, that though a majority, made up largely of Dublin and Belfast ministers, carried the vote in the Irish Assembly for the "Church Hymnary", hundreds of its congregations and many thousands of its people are still so sincerely attached to an authorized Psalmody that they dread the introduction of this Ritualistic and Romish Hymnary as they would do the bringing in of a Popish mass book. The Purity Party in the Irish Presbyterian Church still wields a strong influence for the "keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in His Word". It can count within its ranks many able ministers and elders, and we have good reason to believe a large majority of the people.

Continuing our survey across to the Continent of Europe, we rejoice to find that, notwithstanding the widespread and serious defection abounding in regard to Divine worship, many are still true to the Reformation principles that brought Europe out of superstition and darkness, under Calvin, Luther, and Zwingli. In gallant little Holland, the home of the noble house of Orange, that country of brilliant renown for its fidelity to the cause of truth and freedom, the Lord has reserved many who remain true to "a Scriptural creed and a spiritual worship, disdaining all compromise with Popery and

Prelacy, and fashion, and taste, and culture". Many Hollanders are watching this Conference of Christian Psalm-singers, with prayerful interest, and are in thorough sympathy with its object. We regret that we have not accurate information at hand as to the number of their congregations, ministers, and members; and the same is true of the Boers of South Africa, about a third of whom, previous to the late war, were said to adhere to the Psalms alone in the Ordinance of Praise.

Then away under the Southern Cross, in the Province of Victoria, Australia, there is to be found a faithful little company of the great Psalm-singing host, known as the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, within whose ranks are some strenuous defenders of inspired Psalmody and spiritual worship. The Synod of this little Church has stoutly refused to enter the federation of the larger Presbyterian forces in that vast country, because their entrance into it would involve the surrender of their testimony for an authorized Psalmody and other vital distinctive principles. Let the warm sympathies and fervent prayers of this Conference ascend for that struggling Zion.

Scattered over all the British Colonies, which belt the globe, even where the present day human hymn-singing defection is rampant, are numerous little companies of Psalm-singers who have not swerved from the paths of the Lord. In fact, in almost every country and every nation of the wide, wide world, the songs of the sweet Psalmist of Israel—the songs of the Saviour—are pouring forth their majestic strains of holy devotion, which shall continue to be sung according to God's appointment until time shall be no more. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

"Thy beauty to the King
Shall then delightful be:
And do thou humbly worship Him,
Because thy Lord is He.

The daughter then of Tyre
There with a gift shall be,
And all the wealthy of the land
Shall make their suit to thee.

. . . . . .

They shall be brought with joy
And mirth on ev'ry side,
Into the palace of the King,
And there they shall abide.

And in thy fathers' stead,
Thy children thou shalt take,
And in all places of the earth
Them noble princes make.

I will show forth Thy name
To generations all:
The people, therefore, evermore
To Thee give praises shall."

HOW BEST TO SECURE A RETURN TO THE USE OF THE PSALMS IN THE ORDINANCE OF PRAISE.

By REV. PROFESSOR JOHN SCRIMGER, D.D., Montreal, Canada.

The writer of this Paper is not among the number of those who would confine the Christian Church to the use of the Old Testament Psalms in the Service of Praise, but is one who deeply deplores the tendency in many branches of the Church to crowd them out of use altogether. Whatever justification may be pleaded for the introduction of other material it still remains true that the Psalter is the oldest hymn-book of the Church, can claim the highest sanction, has been abundantly blessed to the spiritual life of God's people in all ages, and contains elements of devotional thought of the greatest value, never thus far so adequately expressed elsewhere, and never likely to find full expression in any other hymnology. It is a matter of the greatest importance, therefore, that the tendency to displace the Psalms should be arrested, and that if possible, they should be restored everywhere to a prominent place in the Church's Service of Praise.

How is this to be done?

The answer to this can be summed up in two phrases—a better metrical version, and better music.

The first requisite I take to be the preparation of a thoroughly good metrical version of the Psalms which shall adequately express the sense of the original, and at the same time conform to the highest literary standard of English verse.

The version of Rouse, that has long been in use in the Presbyterian Churches, while admirably suited to its time, is now felt on all hands to be inferior in literary merit to much of the recent hymnology, and the Psalms suffer by comparison in the popular judgment. The metre is frequently defective, the pronunciation obsolete, the construction inverted, and the phraseology often utterly prosaic from its diffuseness. Something has been done to remedy these defects in the revisions made by various Churches on both sides of the Atlantic, but none of those so far attempted have been radical enough to deal with them successfully, and many of the old objections are still valid against these revisions. The task of preparing a metrical version that will be at once faithful and up to the standard of modern taste is no easy one. Some great authorities have declared it to be impossible. But we believe it can be accomplished if the Churches will only set themselves to it in earnest and take the necessary pains. It would be exceedingly desirable that this might be carried out by a joint committee representative of all the English-speaking Presbyterian Churches, so that all might feel they had a share in it, and be interested in its adoption when completed. Experience shows, too, that the co-operative method yields better results than any individual effort.

Such a revision might retain all the old favourites in Rouse, with such minor changes as might seem to be called for; but it should substitute for the majority of his renderings new versions in different metres, where suitable ones can be found or produced. The Churches have become utterly weary of the eternal common metre of Rouse, and many of them have been attracted to the hymns by the pleasing variety which they furnish in metre and music. As far as possible all the versions retained or adopted should make the stanzas correspond to the division of thought in the Psalms, so that each stanza may represent a complete idea, and stand apart from that which precedes or follows. This is a matter almost entirely overlooked by Rouse; and, on account of it, the sense is often greatly obscured, when a different arrangement would help to make the movement of thought plain to any ordinarily intelligent reader. The stanzas should then be arranged in groups of a length suitable for singing, and corresponding to the natural division of thought in the Psalms. A great many of the Psalms are too long to sing through, and the chopping

of them up into fragments of a conventional length of so many stanzas, irrespective of the sense, is utterly confusing. The proper divisions would vary considerably in length, but there are few instances in which a suitable division cannot be made and so indicated as to be helpful to their intelligent use.

As soon as this version is completed in accordance with these or similar principles, there should be a thoroughly competent musical committee appointed to select or compose suitable tunes for each psalm or each division of a psalm, to which it should be invariably sung whenever used. The practice of leaving the selection of the tunes to the caprice of the individual precentor or choir-leader has proved to be utterly destructive of all musical interest in the Psalms, while the wedding of tunes to individual hymns has given them a tremendous advantage in musical circles to which they would not be entitled from any intrinsic merit.

It would be desirable, of course, if it could be attained, that the same tune might be attached to each Psalm in all the books used throughout the English-speaking world, so that those passing from one Church to another might find themselves familiar with the usage. But, owing to the different stages of musical culture in different countries and Churches, this may not be possible in the meantime. It would, however, be a great step gained if, in the same congregation and in the congregations of the same Church, there should come to be uniformity of practice in this respect. It would mean, of course, that the precentor who knew only half a dozen tunes or so would have to go; but experience proves that the more you expect of choirs and congregations in this respect, the more you are likely to get. The truth is, that many of our Churches, in their Service of Praise, have been lagging far behind the musical culture and capabilities of the people. And the music provided for the Psalms has become, like the versions themselves, obsolete and out of date, representing a style which may suit the survivors from a previous generation, but is wholly unadapted to hold the young. It is the music, even more than the words, which has given popularity to the modern hymnology. Provide equally good music for the Psalms, and a long step will have been taken towards securing a return to their use in all our Churches.*

[Although the writer of this Paper, Rev. Dr. Scrimger, is not in agreement with the Conference as to the exclusive use of the Psalms in the Ordinance of Praise, yet, at the request of Rev. J. W. S. Lowry, Clarinda, Iowa, who asked him to write

* Time did not permit the reading of this Paper at the Conference.

it, we are pleased to include the Paper in our volume, and to add his testimony as to the surpassing excellence of the Psalter, "the oldest hymn-book of the Church." His suggestions, as far as they go, as to the means to be adopted to restore the Psalms everywhere "to a prominent place in the Church's Service of Praise", deserve earnest consideration. We dissent from him as to the general character of the Scottish metrical version. Competent critics and scholars have often recommended it for its strength, its nervous energy, and above all for its faithful rendering of the original Hebrew. This fidelity to the original ought to have saved the version from the charge that its "phraseology" is "often utterly prosaic from its diffuseness". "Diffuseness" is the one thing that cannot be laid to the charge of the Scottish version. The very reverse of diffuseness is the prevalent characteristic of it as befits a faithful rendering of the words of the Lord. Nor can we subscribe to the sentiment that this version is "inferior in literary merit to much of the recent hymnology". The most accomplished and accredited judges of literary merit frequently deplore the utter lack of literary merit in most of the recent hymnology, and of the older hymnology as well. They tell us now and again that only a very small number of uninspired hymns have any literary merit at all. Nor is this to be wondered at. It would seem as though Divine Providence frowned on the impertinent efforts of hymn-writers to rival and supplant the Psalms by their rhymes. Probably all the very best hymns, from a literary point of view, were written by men who never thought for a moment of the possibility of the intrusion of their hymns into the worship of the Holy One in place of His own altogether heavenly Songs. The Scottish metrical version is certainly the best poetic translation of the Psalms that has ever appeared, "the eternal common metre of Rouse" notwithstanding. We may add that it is hardly fair to speak of this version as "the version of Rouse". That description should be left to those who wish by the epithet to disparage the singing of the Psalms. It is true the basis of the version was the translation of Francis Rouse, an eminent scholar, who was a member of the Westminster Assembly, but his work was subjected to careful revision by the Assembly in England; then it was further revised by a committee of the Scotch Assembly, and was not adopted by them till it had been twice sent down to Presbyteries for alterations and suggestions. It was really the outcome of the labours of many of the most eminent scholars of an age that was prolific in learned Hebraists. It is true the version has its defects, as all translations have. Many of these have been removed by recent revisions, and a new version is being

prepared in America by an Inter-denominational committee, an account of which is given in one of the Papers read at the Conference.

If the result of the work of this committee be a version that is superior all round to "Rouse's", the Churches will have reason to bless God. We will wait with interest for its publication, and trust that it will be more conservative and less revolutionary than Professor Scrimger's Paper would seem to indicate.

There are two considerations to which we think Professor Scrimger in his remarks on tunes and congregational singing does not give due weight. One is that, whilst giving utterance to the praise of Jehovah, Psalmody is also a teaching ordinance designed to express truth and to impress it on the minds of the worshippers. This end must never be lost sight of in discussions regarding music for worship. Another matter which we must not lose sight of is that in considering what is adapted to "the musical culture and capabilities of the people", we must take into account the capabilities, not of a select few or of a trained choir, but of *all* the people. All the people are to join in the song in the praise of God. In all ordinary cases this is wholly impossible if elaborate music or a very large number of tunes be introduced. John Curwen, who devoted much thought to the subject of congregational song worship, states that sixty tunes are as many as any average congregation can sing with intelligence and comfort. When books are introduced having four hundred or five hundred tunes, that means the death of congregational singing in the near future. The choir, meeting regularly for practice, must have new tunes, and as the congregation cannot possibly join in tunes which they have never learned, they soon begin to sit silent and listen to the music of the organ and the choir.

In the beginning of his Paper, Professor Scrimger intimates that he would not confine the Church to the use of the Psalms in praise. This is difficult to reconcile with his estimate of the Psalms. He admits that "the Psalter is the oldest hymn-book of the Church, can claim the highest sanction, has been abundantly blessed", &c. All this ought to entitle the Psalms not to a "prominent place", but to the exclusive place "in the Church's Service of Praise". What he might have seen, and might have pointed out, is, that the Psalter is composed of Songs which are the very words of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that God has given it to the Church for the Service of Praise, that He has given no other, that the "sanction" which the Psalter has is the sanction of God's authoritative appointment for use in the Church, that no hymn-book of man's preparing has any such sanction, and that no single hymn

ever written by man has any such sanction. Whatever is brought into the worship of God must have the clear warrant of His own appointment. The Psalms have this; the hymns have it not. Why, then, use what is not appointed by God to the exclusion, even for the time being, of what He has appointed? And why use the uninspired and admittedly inadequate expression of devotion instead of the inspired and necessarily perfect expression? We may apply on this point the declaration of the Book of Ecclesiastes (3, 14), "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth *it*, that *men* should fear before Him." The express command to worship the Lord "in the beauty of holiness" implies at least these three things:—that the worshipper must worship in the beauty of exact obedience to the Divine commands; that he must worship in the beauty of Christ's righteousness apprehended by faith; and that he must worship in dependence upon the beautifying influences of the Holy Spirit. If he sets aside the Divine ordinance, and worships in any way of self-will, he violates every condition of holy and acceptable worship.—THE EDITORS.]

HOW BEST TO SECURE A RETURN TO THE USE OF THE PSALMS IN THE ORDINANCE OF PRAISE.*

By REV. S. R. M'NEILLY, B.A., Bailiesmills, Lisburn, Ireland.

The question is important, and is not free from difficulty. Its importance may be approximately estimated by the nature and extent of the departure and by the necessity for a return.

The departure is from God, and is therefore sin. It involves, (a) a refusal to offer unto the Lord that which He has expressly commanded and graciously provided, (b) an offering unto Him of that which He has not appointed, does not require, and will not accept, and (c) consequently a subordinating of the Divine will to the human, and an exalting of man above God. That is to say, the using of uninspired hymns in the Ordinance of Praise is at once a rejection and a usurpation of the Divine authority; and the user, though he apparently worships God, really worships himself. In other words, hymn-singing in the Service of Praise is in its ultimate analysis a species of idolatry.

* Time did not permit the reading of this Paper at the Conference.

I do not say that every, or any, hymn-singer knowingly offers praise to himself. All may believe that they are worshipping God in an acceptable way, just as Paul believed before his conversion he was rendering to God an acceptable service when he was persecuting the followers of Jesus. Nevertheless, a true analysis of the act of using uninspired hymns in the Ordinance of Praise will reveal the astounding fact that the hymn-singer, though unconsciously, is a worshipper of himself!

As the departure is from God, the return, to be real and permanent, must be to God, and in God's way. An essential pre-requisite of such return is *the returning condition*, which includes consciousness of and sorrow for having corrupted the Ordinance of Praise, an earnest desire for forgiveness, and a firm resolve to comply fully with the Divine appointment.

A first question, then, with Psalm-singers ought to be, How is the returning condition to be produced? Every intelligent Psalm-singer can easily answer the question, though the force of the answer is perhaps seldom realized. The answer is, "*Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.*" Conferences, like the present Conference, would probably produce many good results. But all the efforts of all Psalm-singers, though perfectly right and perfectly well-directed, would of themselves be powerless to change the mind of one hymn-singer. That change cannot be effected by any power but the power of the Holy Spirit. Doubtless every Psalm-singer believes this. But what Psalm-singer does not sometimes lose sight of the fact? And perhaps herein lies much of our weakness in making known and defending the truth respecting the material to be used in the Service of Praise. "The Lord, Whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God." "I", says He, "will not give My glory unto another." If His power to convert is overlooked or partially eclipsed, if it is not regarded as all-sufficient, and every other power as insufficient, we need not wonder if there are conversions that are merely outward, or no conversions at all.

But while it is true that the returning condition can be produced only by the Spirit of God, and the return accomplished only by Him, it is no less true that God has appointed and requires the use of means, and that He will own and bless every Scriptural means used in the right way.

What, then, ought Psalm-singers to do so as to secure a return to the use of the Psalms in the Ordinance of Praise?

Generally:—

1. Psalm-singers ought to remove the things that minister to departure, and the things that tend to hinder return; and,

2. They ought to establish and maintain the things that help to prevent departure, and the things that encourage and assist return.

Particularly :—

1. Psalm-singers ought to pray believingly, earnestly, and frequently, for a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit on themselves and on hymn-singers.

If all the members of the Church were "filled with the Spirit", hymn-singing in the worship of God would be at an end. This modern tower of Babel, whose top makes bold to rise to the third heaven, would be levelled to the ground, without confusion of tongues. The members of the Church everywhere would be of one mind and one heart; and in the Ordinance of Praise only one language—the language of heaven—would be known, and only one Book of Praise—the Songs of the Holy Spirit—would be used.

Why, it may be pertinently asked, is a special baptism of the Spirit being withheld? God has promised that He will pour out His Spirit on all flesh; and His promises are Yea and Amen in Christ. Why is the Church of God not specially enjoying the Spirit's enlightening and sanctifying influences? There must be a resisting in some way or ways of His striving. And one way undoubtedly is the corrupting of the Ordinance of Praise by one part of the Church, and indifference by another part to the work of corruption, of which indifference one of the strongest manifestations is neglect of prayer, or insufficient faith in the power of prayer. "The hymns," it is said, "are coming, and we cannot stop them"!

Psalm-singers themselves need to be quickened and strengthened that their lukewarmness, which is unfaithfulness to Christ, may vanish, that they may be quick to resent, with holy zeal, every intrusion on God's prerogative to order His worship, and that they may be strong to maintain inviolate the law of Christ which governs the Service of Praise. And hymn-singers, some of whom are high and mighty, and look with contempt on Psalm-singers, need to be humbled "under the mighty hand of God", to forsake with sorrow their evil way, and to return in faith unto the Lord.

That both these needs may be supplied, Psalm-singers ought to pray for a special baptism of the Holy Spirit on the whole Church of God; to pray believingly, for "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin", and "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive"; to pray earnestly, for "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"; and to pray frequently, for "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint".

2. Psalm-singers ought, intelligently and fearlessly, in faith and hope, to make known, in every legitimate way, as God gives them opportunity, that the Psalms are the only Divinely-appointed Songs for the Praise Service of the Church, and that the composing or selecting of uninspired hymns for, or the using of uninspired hymns in, the Ordinance of Praise is sin.

God requires the life of His Church to be holy, and therefore requires the Church's Praise Service to be holy. Every intelligent, earnest Christian will not only admit this, but acknowledge that the safety, strength, and efficiency of the Church lie in compliance with the Divine injunction, "Be ye holy." How does the life of the Church become holy? By proclamation of the truth, by belief of the truth, and by obedience to the truth. That is the Divine plan, in the Divine order. The Holy Spirit produces faith and obedience: no other can produce them. And, that faith and obedience may be produced, the Church is to make known the truth. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you."

To whom is the truth respecting the Ordinance of Praise to be made known? To all—to those who have not heard it, that they may accept it: to those who hold it, that they may be confirmed in the belief of it; and to those who have departed from it, that they may be ashamed and repent.

What then are the most efficient means for making known this truth? The following are perhaps among the more important:—Conferences, such as the present Conference, Public Lectures and Discussions, Church Magazines, Circulation of Literature, and *especially the Preaching of the Word*.

Why, it may be asked, is the Ordinance of Praise being so much corrupted in the Evangelical Churches? It is certainly not the fault of the Holy Spirit. The sin lies at the door of the Churches, and specially at the door of the ministers of the Churches. If the ambassador of Christ keeps back any part of the truth, for any reason whatever, he virtually takes away that part from the Word of God. And not only will the suppression of one part lead to the suppression of another, but the error or errors to which the suppressed part is directly opposed will be introduced, subtilely and cautiously perhaps, and will become prevalent. This is one way in which the sin of the unfaithful ambassador finds him out, and in which God afflicts the Church for bearing with the ambassador's unfaithfulness.

Some of us who preach the Gospel may be placed in difficult circumstances. In our congregations there may be hymn-singers, and these may be among the more wealthy and

influential members. We may say, We don't wish to offend them; and in order not to offend them we may be constrained —not certainly by "the love of Christ"—to keep back a part of God's truth. In other words, we may allow "the fear of man", which "bringeth a snare", to enter our hearts and exercise its weakening and sin-producing influences upon us, though Christ requires us and we have bound ourselves by the most solemn ties to declare the whole counsel of God whether men hear or forbear, and though God has assured us that His Word shall not return unto Him void, but that it shall accomplish that which He pleases, and shall prosper in the thing whereto He sent it. By taking this effeminate, cowardly, sinful course, lest we offend man, we offend God. We distrust His promises, we disobey Him, we injure the souls of men, we retard the progress of Christ's kingdom, and we further the cause of Satan.

Some of us who preach the Gospel may be in happier circumstances. Our congregations may be out-and-out Psalm-singers. Yet, there may be danger in the situation. We may be disposed to think there is no necessity to make known the truth regarding the material to be used in the Church's Service of Praise, and may criminally neglect to preach a full Gospel. Our neglect, however, will tend to weaken ourselves and those who are strong, to cause the weak to stumble and fall, to keep from the youth of the Church the knowledge of God's will respecting the acceptable way of worshipping Him, and to withhold, indirectly at least, assistance from those Psalm-singers who are endeavouring, at great personal sacrifice perhaps, to keep "pure and entire" God's Ordinance of Praise. They who are resting on their oars are not going against the stream. There is no promise for, but a woe pronounced against, those who are "at ease in Zion".

If we Psalm-singers who are ministers of the Gospel, intelligently and fearlessly, in faith and hope, declare frequently from our pulpits, and Scripturally prove as we may do, that the Psalms are the only Divinely-appointed Songs for the Ordinance of Praise, and that the use of uninspired hymns in the Praise Service of the Church is sin, the effect upon our congregations and upon the whole Church will be marvellous. Psalm-singing members will become more intelligent and willing defenders of Scriptural worship, and remain steadfast in their adherence to the exclusive use of the Psalms. And this unflinching adherence to God's Psalter, and determined hostility to man's foolish and sinful substitutes, will doubtless be used by the Spirit of God as a special means of bringing about a return to the use of the Psalms in the Ordinance of Praise.

3. Psalm-singers ought to insist on having in the written Creed, Confession, or Testimony of the Church to which they belong, an express declaration to the effect that the Psalms are the only Divinely-appointed Songs for the Praise Service of the Church, and that the use of uninspired hymns in the Ordinance of Praise is sin.

Is there any reason why every doctrine of God's Word which has been denied or perverted may not be formally expressed in the Church's Subordinate Standards? There is not one valid reason. Publication of testimony in behalf of the truth and against error is a duty the obligation of which the Church of God has ever recognized. The duty is not self-imposed: it is a Divine obligation. "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me", said the risen Lord to His assembled disciples, " . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth." And the right performance of this duty is one of the most effective ways by which the Church contends "for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints". Suppose, for example, the doctrines of the Trinity, the Person of Christ, His Atonement, Justification, Faith, and Repentance, had never been explicitly stated in the Creeds of the Reformed Churches, what answers would the members of these Churches give to-day to the questions: How many persons are there in the Godhead? Who is the Redeemer of God's elect? How does Christ execute the office of a priest? What is justification? What is faith in Jesus Christ? What is repentance unto life? Or, suppose these doctrines were now eliminated from the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, what conception of these doctrines would the Churches holding these Subordinate Standards have, say, in a hundred years, or even in thirty years? Justly and necessarily, denied or perverted doctrines of the Word demand a prominent place in the Subordinate Standards of the Evangelical Churches, and demand, too, to be expressed in clear, precise statement, so that "he may run that readeth" them, and that whereto the people of God "have already attained, by that same rule" they may walk.

Is the truth regarding the Ordinance of Praise so unimportant, is the sin of corrupting this Ordinance so trifling, and are the pernicious effects of the sin of so little consequence that the Church need not burden its Confession or Testimony by explicitly declaring the mind of Christ on the matter? Or, is the offering now of strange fire unto the Lord by those who enjoy the full blaze of Gospel light less revolting to God than the offering of it was by those who in a former and dark dispensation looked through types and shadows? It was then

a heinous sin. Is it now a manifestation of Christian culture and piety? God was then a holy and jealous God, and He was a consuming fire. Has He changed? Is He not still holy and jealous? Is He not always a consuming fire? And is not wilful disobedience to His law even more abhorrent after, than before, the coming of His Son?

The very fact that the law of Christ respecting the material of the Church's Praise is flouted and trampled under foot by many professing Christians is a specially strong reason why that law should be explicitly declared in the Subordinate Standards of the Evangelical Churches, and why the sin of violating the law should be explicitly condemned.

The Church of Christ is to "press on unto perfection", both as regards life and extension. And one way in which it will "press on" is, not by removing from, or by refusing to include in, her written Creed any disputed doctrine, but by adding in explicit terms every doctrine of the Word which is denied or rejected. The cry to give up disputed truths, or to hold them in abeyance, for the sake of union, is really a cry to come down from God's heights, to come down from the mountain of truth and holiness into the quagmire of error and sin. God permits doctrine after doctrine of His Word to be doubted, opposed, and denied, not that His people may, after a little struggle, quiescently hand it over to Satan for burial, but that they may understand it more clearly and hold it more tenaciously, and that it may have by explicit declaration a definite place in their Testimony. We may, I think, take it for granted that every truth of God's Revelation will be contested by Satan, and that the followers of the Lamb must "buy", by conflict, every such truth, and exhibit it in the symbols of their faith as a trophy won. When they do that, they will be united, and the end will be at hand. "They overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of *the word of their testimony*." Meantime, let Psalm-singers thus buy and thus exhibit the truth regarding God's Book of Praise, and the iniquity of hymn-singing will soon begin to hide its head with shame.

4. Psalm-singers ought to insist that an intelligent and sincere acceptance of their Church's Creed, Confession, or Testimony, thus amended, be a *sine quâ non* of membership in the Church to which they belong.

Impossible! You could'nt get the people to understand!

Probably not; for the things of God are spiritually discerned, and it is the Spirit of God that gives spiritual discernment. Teachers in the Church are not responsible for results, if they faithfully perform their duty. One part of

their duty is to present the truth intelligently, and to wait in faith and hope for the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit, Who only can guide His people into the truth, and Whose guidance of them "into all the truth" Christ has promised.

But, may the creed of a living Church be a dead letter? Can it be? It is the truth makes free—not the truth sealed, but the truth known and believed. The religious life that is not the outcome of the knowledge and belief of the truth is a miserable counterfeit. Perhaps there never was a time in the history of the Church when spiritual life was so true and full as in the age of the Apostles; and for clear understanding of the will of God, and for strong faith in Him, the Apostolic Church is unsurpassed. To do God's will, we must believe His Word; and to believe His Word, we must know it.

The requirement of an intelligent and sincere acceptance of the Church's Creed as an indispensable condition of membership would have a powerful educative influence upon the whole Church. It would quicken and strengthen faithful teachers; and it would increase the knowledge of honest applicants, and deepen their sense of responsibility. On the other hand, it would tend to awaken the conscience of the unfaithful teacher, and to deter the insincere applicant from professing that which he does not know or does not believe. And if the Creed contained, as it ought to contain, a chapter or section of a chapter, setting forth in explicit terms the teaching of God's Word respecting the Ordinance of Praise, then, the intelligent and sincere acceptance of the Creed being an indispensable condition of membership, the honest applicant, before committing himself, would know and believe that which in the sight of the holy and just God he is about to affirm, and which is to form a part of the bond of union and basis of communion between himself and his fellow members. Moreover, the requiring of such acceptance would, not only necessarily and very efficiently educate in the knowledge and belief of the truth respecting the Ordinance of Praise, but would prepare for working and for suffering in its maintenance and defence; and it would, therefore, strongly tend to prevent departure from, and to hasten return to, the use of the Psalms in that Ordinance.

But would not the requiring of an intelligent and sincere acceptance of such a creed prevent the extension of Christ's kingdom? No; it would lift the Church up to a far higher intellectual, moral, and spiritual level, and make her far more active and effective in carrying on the work of the Lord. Her members, instead of being as untempered and rusty weapons, would be as polished shafts in Jehovah's quiver.

They would not flee on the approach of foes, nor crouch down and beg for life, but would stand in the gate, and withstand the enemy. "The people that know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."

5. Psalm-singers ought to insist that discipline be exercised on those office-bearers and members of the Church to which they belong, who, in violation of the law of Christ and of their own solemn engagement, use uninspired hymns in the Ordinance of Praise.

Pshaw! Hymn-singers would'nt stand discipline! They would leave the Church first!

Well——what then? the Church destroyed? the Church's Redeemer and King overcome? and Satan reigning universally supreme?

But the question is not, what hymn-singers may do, or what they may be supposed to do, in given circumstances. The question is, what does Christ require the Church to do when His law is publicly violated by some of His professed followers? He has appointed Discipline in the Church that offenders may be taught not to offend, that others may fear to offend, and that the purity and therefore the strength of the Church may be maintained. Is this Ordinance to be respected in some cases and ignored in others? Is a member of the Church to be subjected to discipline for being guilty, say, of theft or slander, and to be let go scot-free when he corrupts the Ordinance of Praise? Is man's property or character of more importance than the worship of the infinitely holy One? And if the Church Courts spare the rod, do they show that they really love the erring members, and hate the violation of Christ's law? And will the laxity of discipline transform the law-breakers into loving law-abiding citizens of Zion, and please and honour Zion's King?

As a Church sows, so shall it reap. Had the judicatories of the Evangelical Churches instituted proceedings against the office-bearers and members who at the beginning corrupted the Ordinance of Praise by the introduction of uninspired hymns, and subjected them to wholesome discipline, they would not have done more than Christ requires—they are not at liberty to do less. They would have used one of God's specially appointed means for "keeping pure and entire" His worship and ordinances, and God would have owned and blessed the right use of the Divinely-appointed means. The sin of hymn-singing would have been nipped in the bud.

It may be said, however, that hymn-singing has become so prevalent, and hymn-singers are so numerous and influential, that it would be altogether fruitless to attempt now to exercise

discipline. But neglect to discharge a particular duty in the past, and the evil results of the neglect, are no justification for not attempting to discharge the duty in the present. The neglect and its evil results should rather be regarded as strong reasons why the performance of the duty should be promptly attempted. And if the exercise of discipline were attempted in entire dependence upon the Head of the Church, and with earnest desire to glorify Him, He would honour even the attempt to observe His Ordinance; and He would give power to His faithful servants, so that the small beginnings in attempt would eventually become great in performance. There is nothing too hard for the Lord.

6. Psalm-singers ought to have no organic union with those Churches that refuse to bring their constitution and practice into harmony with the law of Christ which requires the exclusive use of the Psalms in the Ordinance of Praise.

By the constitution of a Church is meant, in this connection, its articles of faith and body of laws. Formal acceptance of these, and public recognition of their acceptance by the proper authority—Session or Presbytery in a Presbyterian Church—produce organic union. Conversely, organic union commits to the acceptance of the Church's constitution.

Now if a Church refuses to legislate in favour of the exclusive use of the Psalms, whether by enactment in favour of uninspired hymns, or by no enactment at all, the office-bearers and members of that Church are committed to the principle of refusal. Those of them who are Psalm-singers may protest against the refusal, and may so far endeavour to maintain their integrity. Nevertheless, they are in organic union with a Church which officially refuses to recognize the law of Christ respecting the material of the Church's Praise. The recognition of this law is essential to the spiritual well-being of the Church; and the refusal to recognize it naturally opens up the way for the use of uninspired hymns in, and for the exclusion of the Psalms from, the Ordinance of Praise. And once the door is left ajar for the entrance of one sin, it may soon be pushed wide open for the entrance of its companions.*

7. Psalm-singers ought to refuse to unite in observing the Ordinance of Praise with those who corrupt it by the use of uninspired hymns.

* The writer of this Paper is aware that there are respected brethren, members of the Conference, who take a different view of their duty in this matter; and inasmuch as his Paper was not read at the Conference, where there would have been an opportunity for discussion, he omits some detailed arguments which he had written on this particular point.

We live in an age of much religious effort which finds expression in various ways. One way is by means of what is termed the Public Undenominational Meeting. Under this head there are what are called Evangelistic Services, United Services, Temperance Meetings, Meetings for Benevolent purposes, etc. To these meetings professing Christians of the various denominations are invited; and to overcome religious scruples the assurance is often given, "We shall meet on common ground," though it might be difficult for an intelligent Christian to find much Scriptural ground that is common to Calvinists and Arminians. At these meetings the use of hymns is the rule, that of the Psalms the exception. If Psalm-singers attend any of these meetings, they ought not to take part in the Praise Service, if uninspired hymns are used. If they do take part, they will be acting inconsistently, and their inconsistency will be sin double-dyed. They will be really assisting to corrupt the Ordinance of Praise, contrary to their own convictions. They will be not merely sinking their own testimony, but by public act testifying against their own testimony, and will thus be doing far more than hymn-singers to prevent a return to the use of the Psalms in the Service of Praise.

The meeting being ostensibly undenominational, the Psalm-singer's duty is to object to the use of hymns as the introduction of a denominational element, and to insist that the Psalms, which are undenominational, be used. If his objection is unheeded, he ought to protest and leave the meeting. But a better way perhaps would be, for Psalm-singers to make the exclusive use of the Psalms in the Praise Service one of the indispensable conditions of their attending such meetings.

If Psalm-singers adopted either of these courses, but especially the latter course—and they are bound in loyalty to Christ to witness for Him in the most effective way—they would do much to secure compliance with the will of Christ as regards His worship, and to prevent compliance with the sinful desires of sinning man.

I regret that time will not permit me to do more than mention the following additional particulars. The performance, however, of the duties indicated is so obviously necessary to prevent departure from, and to secure return to, the use of the Psalms in the Ordinance of Praise, that the bare statement of the duties will, in the circumstances, be sufficient.

8. Psalm-singers ought (a) to observe Family Worship daily, and to use in the Praise part of this religious exercise

the Psalms in their consecutive order, (b) to teach diligently their children in early life that the Psalms are God's Book of Songs, and that these Songs and no other are to be used when His people sing praise to Him, and (c) to encourage their children to memorize and love the Psalms.

9. Psalm-singers ought to petition the Supreme Court of the Church to which they belong (a) to enjoin its Sessions, Missionaries, and Sabbath School Teachers to encourage in laudable ways the children under their care to commit to memory the Psalms, and (b) to enjoin its Ministers to devote a portion of the time of Public Worship on the Lord's Day to the practical exposition of the Psalms in their consecutive order.

10. Psalm-singers ought to prepare, on the Ordinance of Praise, (a) an Elementary Catechism for use in the Family and in the Sabbath School, and (b) a Hand-book for advanced classes, and for members of the Church generally.

11. Psalm-singers ought (a) to prepare a Metrical Version of the Psalms, which would be in all respects as perfect as possible, and to have it bound without the addition of hymn or paraphrase, (b) to compile a suitable Tune Book, and (c) to give assiduous attention to the Theory and Practice of Sacred Music.

12. Psalm-singers ought to meet frequently (a) for Prayer, (b) to discuss the various aspects of the Psalmody Question, and (c) to devise effective means for deepening and extending the knowledge of Scriptural Worship, and to arrange for the prompt and judicious use of the means devised. And,

13. Psalm-singers ought to enter into a Solemn League and Covenant (a) to witness faithfully against the sin of using uninspired hymns in the Ordinance of Praise, (b) to use all lawful means in behalf of the exclusive use of the Psalms in that Ordinance, and (c) to give God no rest until He pours out specially His Spirit upon all His people, so that Psalm-singers themselves may sing the Psalms with clearer light and fuller joy, and that they who have gone into the captivity of hymn-singing may return with weeping and supplications, and may "walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble".

"Arise, O God, plead Thine own cause!"

PRAISE—Psalm 102, 13-18 (2nd version).

A UNIFORM METRICAL VERSION OF THE PSALMS.

By REV. J. C. K. MILLIGAN, D.D., New York, U.S.A.

The Scottish Revision of Rouse's version of the Psalms supplanted Sternhold and Hopkins in 1650, and for two hundred and fifty years has been the Psalter of the Presbyterian Churches. In its day it was a noble version, and has continued to be used in the praise of our Divine Redeemer, notwithstanding many imperfections. These defects are chiefly owing to the changes in our English language, the more accurate knowledge of the Hebrew, and large additions of paraphrase that weaken the majesty and power of the text, and often obscure its meaning. The failure to revise it and remedy these defects is believed to have been one cause of the departure of Protestants from its use, and of the introduction of hymns into the Presbyterian Churches. The large use of the Psalms in prose by hymn-singers shows clearly that their objection is not to the Psalms, but to the monotony of common metres and the want of poetry suitable for a song service in our version.

For fifty years and more there has been a loud outcry among the Psalm-singing Christians for the removal of these defects; but it has been resisted by a reverence for the old version as almost, if not altogether, inspired; by a superstitious fear that changes would lead to entire abandonment of the Psalter; and by a conservative spirit, or moral inertia, that abhorred progress, and clung to past attainments as a drowning man to his straw. Consequently the Revisions thus far made have been by isolated Churches, have removed only the grosser defects, and have destroyed the unity of praise by multiplied versions.

Slowly but surely, however, the opposition to revision has been passing away. Between the years 1840 and 1870 many private individuals and committees appointed by different Churches prepared and published emendations and new versions; but these met with only partial favour. In 1859 the American United Presbyterian Assembly undertook the revision of the Scottish version and the preparation of new Psalm-versions in a variety of metres. The other Psalm-singing Churches were asked to co-operate in this work, but all declined the invitation. Committee after committee reported the results of their efforts, which were uniformly rejected when overtured to the Presbyteries. But the Assembly persisted in the work, and in 1871 the present Revision of the old version and the new Psalm-versions were

authorized to be used in the congregations. The revision of the old version was limited to "the removal of obsolete words, the correction of errors in grammar and punctuation and defective lines, so as not to impair its integrity and identity". The new versions were 140 in 22 different metres, which left 30 Psalms without a new version, and gave two or three versions to several others.

In 1879 the Irish Presbyterian Church authorized the use of its Revised version. This made fewer verbal changes, retained some defective lines, and added only 34 new Psalm-versions in a few new metres; but in several instances it removed the paraphrases by combining two stanzas in one. In 1889 the American Reformed Presbyterian Synod, after years of effort, authorized the use of their Revision. This added 39 new versions in other metres to as many Psalms, removed the paraphrases from the old version by scores of combinations of the stanzas, and corrected the use of the Divine names, conforming them to the original text. Nearly all the versions and revisions have treated the Divine names with indifference, as in hundreds of cases they omit the Divine name in the text; as often they add a Divine name not in the text, to complete a line or make a rhyme; and even more frequently change one name for another, without either rhyme or reason. As these names are descriptions of Divine character, distinctions of Divine persons (as in Psalm 110, 1), and designations of majesty and fame, this manner of dealing with them is not "the holy and reverent use" required in the third commandment.

These revisions were handicapped by the fear of affecting the integrity of the old version, so that many defects were still retained. In many instances the poetic accent violates the proper pronunciation of words. The second syllable, instead of the first, is accented in af*ter*, en*ter*, un*der*, in*to*, un*to*, op*en*, ma*ny*, loc*usts*; and the names, Aaron, Israel, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, &c.; and the little words, and, in, of, the, are accented, while important words are in the unaccented syllable. Again, faulty rhymes are numerous. In Psalm 73 we have these—one, gone; see, prosperity; wish, is; have, receive; oppressed, beast; alone, none; shall, all. In Psalm 103 we have these—is, bless; forgive, relieve; mouth, youth; gracious, plenteous; he, iniquity; gone, known; alway, obey; Lord, word; stored, Lord. Repeatedly we have syllables ending in *y* to rhyme together, or with a syllable ending in *e* or *i*. It is difficult to avoid these errors in every case, but to many they are a fly in the ointment.

A more serious error is the constant dilution of the text by feeble paraphrases, substituting human platitudes for the

grand periods of the Divine original. A paraphrase or an abridgment is often necessary, and the wisdom of revisers must decide between them. If condensation obscures the sense, it is better to paraphrase; but often a terse abridgment is better than any paraphrase. The Revised versions retain these and similar paraphrases: Psalm 34, 20—"He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken" is versified thus—

"He carefully his bones doth keep,
Whatever can befall;
That not so much as one of them
Can broken be at all."

Psalm 68, 18—"Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led Thy captivity captive" is rendered—

"Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious,
Ascended up on high;
And in triumph victorious led
Captive captivity."

Psalm 78, 55—"He drove out the nations before them" is paraphrased—

"The nations, which in Caanan dwelt,
By His almighty hand
Before His people's face He drove
Out of their native land."

See also verses 18, 28, 30, and 41. Psalm 119 can easily be given in 88 stanzas, instead of 132. The Committee have rendered Psalm 105, 3-10 in four stanzas, instead of eight—

3. Let hearts rejoice that seek the LORD;
His Holy Name adore;
4. Seek ye Jehovah and His strength;
His face seek evermore.

5. Recall the judgments of His mouth,
His wondrous works of grace;
6. Ye sons of Jacob, chosen ones,
His servant Abram's race.

7. He only is the LORD our God,
   All earth His judgment fears;
8. His cov'nant He hath kept in mind,
   His word to endless years.

9. This cov'nant He with Abram made,
   His oath to Isaac swore;
10. Confirmed the same to Israel,
   A cov'nant evermore.

In view of such defects, and the use of four different versions by the Psalm-singing Churches, the duty of providing a version that would be acceptable to all Christians became very manifest and pressing. Therefore, in 1893, the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, in answer to "a Memorial, asking for a metrical version of the Book of Psalms, which would be acceptable to all the Psalm-singing Churches of our country", appointed "a committee of three to confer with a similar committee that may be appointed by our sister denominations".

In 1894 this committee reported encouraging progress. Overtures had been made to Assemblies and Synods, asking their co-operation, and letters were written to leading ministers requesting their views and influence. Only partial replies had been received, but these were so favourable that the committee advised "the preparation of a complete metrical version of the inspired Psalter for the use of all Churches and Christians". The Assembly approved the report and resolved "to earnestly press the matter upon the attention of other Churches in order to secure their co-operation".

In 1895, notwithstanding reported discouragements, the Assembly appointed "a permanent committee on a Union Metrical Version of the Psalms". This committee reported in 1896 that the committees of four different Churches, viz., the Presbyterian (North), the Reformed Presbyterian Synod and General Synod, and the United Presbyterian, had held a meeting, sent invitations to other bodies to join in the work, and arranged for a meeting of the joint committee. And in 1897 it was reported that the joint committee had agreed upon a plan of operation, appointed a sub-committee to have oversight of the work, and to call a meeting of the joint committee when it was deemed advisable. But in 1898 the permanent committee reported a lack of interest in the work, and failure to secure a joint committee meeting, and asked to be discharged from further effort in the matter.

The Assembly then authorized the Board of Publication to receive and pass upon revisions. For two years the matter was in abeyance. But the Board succeeded in enlisting delegates from the Canada Presbyterian Church, and the four Churches named above; and a joint meeting was held in New York, April 20-25, 1900. At this meeting the first nine Psalms were revised, metres were selected for the following thirty-two Psalms, and another meeting was appointed to be held in Asbury Park, N.J., on September 18-27, the same year. Additional delegates appeared at this meeting, representing the Associate Presbyterian Church, the Christian Reformed, the (Dutch) Reformed, the two Reformed Presbyterian Synods, the Presbyterian (North), the United Presbyterian, and, at a later date, the Associate Reformed Synod of the South.

The plan of operations was adhered to, viz., "To express the exact thought of each line of the original, in the language of the Authorized and Revised versions of the Bible, and in the best metrical form attainable." The meeting in Asbury Park was followed by another in Philadelphia, April 24-May 7, 1901, a fourth in Toronto, Canada, August 20-29, 1901, and a fifth in Allegheny, Pa., April 15-24, 1902. At these meetings one version of each of the first 105 Psalms has been prepared. The next meeting is to be held in Montreal, Canada, September 15-25, 1902, at which it is hoped to complete the revision as far as Psalm 121. The remainder of the Psalter may be completed at another meeting in the Spring of 1903; but the work already done must then have a final revision, and probably a few second versions will be prepared in order to give a greater variety of metres.

The joint committee has had from twelve to sixteen delegates at its meetings, representing nine different Churches, three of which use hymns in whole or in part in their praise service. With widely differing views on the question of Psalmody, the limits of an exact translation, and the proper interpretation of the Psalms, there have been many earnest discussions in the joint committee. It has a conservatism that would retain "the bulls that fiercely look", the wash-pots, shoes, and every name in the long lists, except the Names of the Lord, as essential to fidelity, and especially because it is familiar; these grudge any change until it is clearly shown to be requisite. And it has a liberalism to which the literalism of the text is of small importance, the paraphrases are a sweet approach to a precious hymn, and the insertion of a line, couplet, or even a stanza not in the text would be no violation of a conscientous principle. And yet, so manifest have been the guidance and constraints of the Holy Spirit, that, after warm debate, there

has been almost entire unanimity, and very rare dissent from any conclusion.

The committee aims to correct wrong accents, faulty rhymes, and inaccurate translations, to remove needless paraphrases, to make the sense clear, to adapt the metre to the sentiment of the Psalms, to secure a variety of metres, and to have the words flow smoothly as a pleasant song. In several cases changes were made because the sense was liable to be misunderstood. In Psalm 105, 25-37, the combination of verses in the stanzas and the use of pronouns make it uncertain as to "the hearts turned to hate" and those who "obeyed His word", and even represent the slain first-born as "brought forth with gold and silver". By a change in the combination and the supply of a noun or two all is made plain, as follows:—

25. Their foes were turned in subtle hate
His servants to oppose;
26. Then He His servant, Moses, sent,
And Aaron whom He chose.
27. His mighty signs and wonders great,
In Egypt they displayed;
28. He darkness sent, and made it dark,
For they His words obeyed.

29. He turned their waters into blood,
And all their fish He killed;
30. Then frogs came up o'er all the land,
Kings' palaces they filled.
31. He spake, and swarms of gnats and flies
In all their borders came;
32. He gave them hail instead of rain,
And set their land aflame.

33. He smote their fig-trees and their vines,
Yea, all their trees He brake;
34. The cankerworm and locust came
In myriads when He spake.
35. These soon devoured the fruits of toil,
And every herb at length;
36. At last He smote their first-born all,
The chief of all their strength.

37. He then led forth His chosen tribes
With silver and with gold;
And there was not a feeble one
In all their ranks enrolled.

A New Version—Psalm 104, 10s and 11s.

1. My soul, bless the Lord, O Lord, Thou art great:
With majesty clad Thou dwellest in state,
Thou robest Thyself with a garment of light,
And stretchest the sky as a curtain by night.

2. His chambers great beams in waters He lays;
The clouds are His car, the winds are His ways.
He maketh the winds all His messages bear,
He biddeth the flames for His service prepare.

3. He laid for the earth foundations secure,
That firm it should stand, and ever endure;
Around it He cast as a vesture the sea,
Above all the hills the deep waters raised He.

4. But at Thy rebuke they fled in dismay!
They climbed up the hills, through valleys made way;
They sought out the place where they were to remain;
Their bounds Thou hast set lest the land they regain.

5. He sendeth forth springs down into the vale,
They run 'mid the hills, all life they regale,
When quenching their thirst all the creatures may drink,
While birds nest and sing in the trees on the brink.

DISCUSSION.

Rev. George Magill, Belfast, Ireland, said—Mr. Chairman, we may safely admit that the verses or portions that Dr. Milligan has read have not suffered in the reading. I do

not think it is desirable to have many versions of the same Psalm. I think it is calculated to leave wrong impressions upon those who object to their exclusive use. If we are to confine ourselves to the Psalter, we should endeavour to have only one version of each Psalm. A committee was formed by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland for dealing with this very subject of revision, and those who were considered less or more competent to revise, were put upon that committee. But they were limited as to the character of the changes they might make. They were expected to confine themselves principally to the points referred to in this Paper—that is, they were to restrict themselves to faults in rhyme, in accent, and in translation. Possibly some of them would have had changes that were not effected, and many changes were made that some of them did not like. I have an intense admiration for some of the renderings that Dr. Milligan has given us; and if our American friend would send over this book, and allow us to have the privilege of seeing it before it would be ultimately given to the public, I should say the General Assembly would appoint a committee to look into it, and if the changes in the other Psalms be of kindred character to the changes Dr. Milligan has submitted, I would take the liberty of saying that it will get a good reception in Ireland. I would like to say that, unless there was an absolute necessity, I would not desire to have any great change. There is a halo about the old rugged Scotch Psalter, and if we take into account what Sir Walter Scott thought of it, we should be very slow to make great changes. Sir Walter, himself a great poet, had great regard for the grandeur of the Scottish version; and he thought that, in many respects, the metrical version was closer to the original than even the prose version. Murray M'Cheyne was of the same opinion. There is just one thought more: Would it not be possible to cultivate the musical talents of the community to such an extent that we could sing the prose version? It would, perhaps, be a little difficult, in the first instance, to engage in what is called chanting. I refer to this because a considerable number of people have got a good musical education, and we would be interfering with no Christian principle if we endeavoured to raise the musical standard so as to make chanting possible.

Rev. Professor Dick, M.A., D.D., Belfast, Ireland, said—I think that Dr. Milligan and his colleagues in this work of revision are engaged in a very painstaking work, and it would seem to me, in listening to some of the verses submitted to us, that they are on the whole fairly conservative in their work. I should like, however, to have that version before me for

revision before I should adopt it. With regard to one line of a verse that was suggested by Dr. Milligan, "there was not a feeble one . . . enrolled." What does that imply? The Scottish version is, "Weak in their tribes were none." Is the proposed amendment an improvement? I think not. "Not a feeble one . . . enrolled," suggests not that there were no weak ones, but that the weak ones were left out when the enrolling took place, which destroys the sense. With regard to accent, it is possible for us—and I suppose every one who reads poetry will say that it is possible for us—to lay quite too much stress on accent. The very faults of accent, to which the writer of the Paper referred, as found in the Scottish version of the Psalms, are found within the first three lines of "Paradise Lost"—

> "Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world, and all our woe."

The "first" of the first line is shortened and "dis-" is lengthened, and the "and" must be accented, if we insist upon a mechanical adherence to accent; so the word "into", in the third line, would require to have the accent on the second syllable. We find a similar defiance of mechanical rules in that line which is well known—

> "Hail! Holy Light, offspring of Heaven first-born!"

Here the accent required by a rigid adherence to the iambic flow of the verse would be on the syllable "spring"; but the great poet was satisfied to have the accent on the syllable "off". The Scottish version may surely be allowed the same latitude in the matter of accent that was good enough for John Milton. To refuse such latitude would be to turn poetry into mathematics.

One other thing I wish to say. I should very much wish that when this question of revision is being dealt with, those who are dealing with the old version would try to confine themselves as far as possible to changing any archaic expression to be found in it, and any faulty grammar, and any incorrect translations of the original, of which there may be a few, and repress any exaggerated statements about its tremendous defects.

Rev. Isaac Vance, Gransha, Belfast, Ireland, said—I had intended not to speak at any of your meetings, and yet I deem

it right to state that, in the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, in so far as I was able to observe, the men who found special fault with the Scottish metrical version of the Psalms were not, as after events clearly proved, particularly anxious to preserve their continued use in public worship. I remember those persons rehearsing their objections, perhaps not in exactly the same words, but in language of similar import, as I have heard repeated here this evening, as to faulty metre and obsolete and antiquated words and phrases. Moreover, it seemed to me a most remarkable thing that when the revised version was before the Assembly as to its publication, the party who had found most fault with the Scottish metrical version of the Psalms were the first to propose and advocate that the Paraphrases be bound up with the revised version, in the evident hope that this might be done under the authority and sanction of the Assembly. Having, on behalf of the publishers, obtained from the Assembly permission to include in the same binding with the Psalter the Paraphrases, this party urged on the Assembly the duty of a revision of the Paraphrases to purge them of heterodox doctrine! The Assembly, however, firmly declined to entertain this proposal, and withheld its sanction of the Paraphrases in Praise Worship.

I beg to say that I must see this American revised version, and must have an opportunity of examining it, before venturing to express an opinion, either favourable or adverse. But this I do say, that I do not think that the revised version of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland is any marked improvement upon the Scottish version. I am persuaded it is not. I have not adopted it. I have often thought that it is a suggestive and remarkable fact that the persons who were anxious to secure for the Paraphrases from the General Assembly some measure of approval, notwithstanding their admitted doctrinal errors, were at that time, and are still, amongst the foremost and most ardent advocates of uninspired hymns, that are certain in a short time to set aside in the Presbyterian Church of Ireland the Divinely-inspired Songs of Zion, unless—which is not to be expected—the natural course of this innovation be totally different from what it has been in the English Presbyterian Church and in every other Presbyterian Church known to us. The human invariably supplants the inspired, and afterward holds undisputed and undisturbed possession.

As to the alleged difficulty in reading properly some of the Psalms in the Scottish metrical version, I am persuaded that even these may be so read as not to jar on the sensitive ears

of the educated who devoutly desire to unite in sincere worship to God.

Praise—Psalm 66, 1-5.

RESOLUTION OF THANKS.

Rev. H. W. Temple, D.D., Washington, Pa., U.S.A., said —It gives me much pleasure to present the resolution that is in my hand, which is to include a vote of thanks to many, and I think I speak for all those from the Western side of the Atlantic when I say that the thanks will be given heartily. We came to find a more cordial welcome not only here, but throughout these lands, than we were looking for. We came to friends and acquaintances when we came to this Conference. There was an added warmth and cordial hospitality because of the united feeling on the one great question which has brought us all together. We are here not only for general interests, but for one great interest common to us all, which makes us in some respects peculiar, and separates us in some degree from others with whom we yet hope to unite even upon this point. For myself, I wish to propose this vote of thanks with heartiness. I am glad to be able to offer this resolution, which I shall now read :—

"That we desire to place on record our sense of indebtedness, for services rendered, to the Honorary Secretaries, Rev. Professors Petticrew and Dick, and to Rev. S. R. M'Neilly, whose assistance to them was invaluable ; to Rev. Joseph W. Stewart Lowry, Clarinda, Iowa, who took such an active interest in the movement from the beginning ; to Mr. Torrens Elliott, Convener of the Arrangements Committee ; to Mr. Samuel E. A. Acheson, Convener of the Hospitality Committee ; to the Honorary Treasurers, Mr. James Harper, J.P., Londonderry, and Mr. John Woods, Belfast, and to all who contributed towards the expenses of the Conference ; to the kind friends in Belfast who extended hospitality to delegates from a distance ; to Mr. Wm. Martin, who led the Psalmody ; to the newspapers for their excellent summarised reports of the proceedings; and to all others who in any way contributed to the success of the Conference."

Rev. James Kerr, D.D., Glasgow, Scotland, said—I have the greatest pleasure in seconding the proposal of thanks to those who contributed so much time and talent to the success of this Psalm-singers' Conference. If we were not full of gratitude to those who have so energetically devoted themselves to the objects for which we assembled, we would be in opposition to one of the virtues often exemplified in the Psalms themselves. The Conference has been a great success. It has exceeded all expectations—even those of the Hon. Secretaries themselves and the others most closely allied with them in the preparations. Professor Petticrew has been busy for weeks in planning and correspondence, and we all are witnesses of his constancy and dignity throughout these gatherings. Professor Dick is a host in himself on almost all questions of orthodoxy; and among his many services to the Church on the matter of an Inspired Psalmody—now increased—must not be forgotten his discussion on Hymnology, two years ago, when he performed a work that will never require repetition. When this resolution states that our gratitude is due to the Rev. S. R. M'Neilly for his invaluable assistance to the Hon. Secretaries, it states what is certainly within the truth. Mr. M'Neilly consented to assist the Hon. Secretaries, about two months ago, and he has from that time done as much work as either of them. These gentlemen have been energetically supported by Messrs. Acheson and Elliott, who have been flitting up and down the house continually. Mr. Martin has conducted the Praise Service from first to last, sacrificing business interests for the whole time the Conference has been in session. The local papers have, as I run over my experience of conferences and conventions in other cities, given us reports which have been thoroughly satisfactory, and their editors and reporters are entitled to our thanks; and those thanks we record. We cannot repay all these friends and brethren for the many services they have rendered. Our debt makes us insolvent. But, as an old friend of mine in the far North of Scotland once said to hosts of his and mine, in a prayer he offered as we left their home—"Thou knowest we canna reward Thy servants for the kindness they have shown us, but surely your ain sel'll reward them at the resurrection o' the just." If, however, any of them turn hymn-singers, we will be certain to remind them of these days and their enthusiasm for the Psalm-singers' Conference. They have certainly not been like some prophets and others in and about Belfast. In the days of Ahab, certain prophets were hid by fifties in the caves, when they should have been visible in fighting the battles of the Lord; but they were (as an American friend of mine

suggests) "putty" prophets. Some of them will say, when they learn that this statement was made in the Conference—Oh! to suggest that these times are as bad as those when superstition and idolatry ran riot in Israel! Well, then, it was all the easier for them to come out. Those who have come out now publicly at the call of our leaders are not putty prophets, nor even concrete prophets, but sterling granite. While thankful to them for their many services in this great cause, let us say of them, in one of the songs of Zion—

> "They shall be brought, with gladness great
> And mirth on every side,
> Into the palace of the King,
> And there they shall abide.

Professor Petticrew, M.A., D.D., D.Lit., Londonderry, Ireland, in replying to the motion, said—Nobody could have had more admirable helpers than they had had. They were indebted to their Christian friends in Belfast who attended with such regularity the meetings. They believed that an impression for good had been made on the community even outside their immediate sphere, and, although that had been the first Conference of the kind that they had ever had, he did trust that at no distant date they would have another.

Professor Dick, M.A., D.D., Belfast, Ireland, in replying, made particular mention of the names of Mr. Acheson, Mr. M'Neilly, and Mr. Lowry.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS.

Rev. James Parker, Ph.D., Jersey City, U.S.A., said—Mr. Chairman and friends, much of what I might have said has been before said, but I would do violence principally to my own feelings, and possibly to the feelings of those whom I represent, were I not to say a word with regard to our reception and our treatment. Most of us—I mean specially we from beyond the sea—had heard of the reputation of Irish hospitality. It floated across the waters; we expected much; we received much more than we expected, and we could say as the honoured Queen of old said, "The half was not told." Now, we felt a little strange when we came among you, but

your cordial reception soon banished that feeling of strangeness, and we felt, as has already been remarked, that we were among friends. Brethren and sisters, I do not attempt to say anything about this Conference, save that we from America have made a discovery—a discovery somewhat similar to that made by the spies who were sent to search out the land: they discovered that there were giants in the land. So we have discovered, who have come across to Ireland, giants, not belonging to any particular denomination represented here, but to every denomination having a part in this Conference. As we listened to the Papers and Addresses during this Conference, there was one thought shone out clearly from the inspired Psalms, and that was Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King; and we are indebted to this Conference for the clearest, fullest, most interesting view we have ever had. Now, if you will suffer a word of exhortation, let me say that we regard the duties and privileges that are before us as two-fold. We have a defensive duty to perform. In listening to these Papers, the impression has come in upon us that the flood of uninspired songs is threatening to oversweep the Churches; that we steadfastly hold by the songs of the Holy Spirit—that is the duty of those who recognize this fact. Then we recognize that our warfare is not only defensive, but that in order to be successful it must be aggressive as well. Let me propose to you three words that should guide us in this aggressiveness—in this endeavour to plant the standard of Psalmody everywhere.

The first of these words is, Educate. The mists of ignorance have settled down upon a great portion of the Christian world regarding this Book of inspired Songs. They do not know their merits. It remains for us to educate in regard to the value of this Book—in regard to its incomparable excellence. Educate; yes, and begin your education right at home. My friends, there has not been anything more important brought before this Conference, I venture to say, than the subject to which attention was called this afternoon, namely, the relation that the youth should sustain to this Book. Educate the children in youth; begin in the home; carry it forward in the Sabbath school. Let these Songs of the Spirit be committed to memory by our offspring; let them early learn the pathways of Sion's Songs, and then they will not seek to go in forbidden ways. But this education should go on outside our own immediate members; and therefore Conferences like this one, or Conferences more local, should be held frequently, and literature which we have upon this subject circulated—and incomparable literature, I think, we shall have as soon as the proceedings of this Conference have been

published. Literature upon this subject should be widely scattered throughout the Church of Jesus Christ. Now, I believe, Christian friends, that the Church of Christ is ready for this. You may not have felt the reaction from hymn-singing in this country, but we across the Atlantic have felt something of it; and the very leaders of the Psalm-singing Churches, that have almost wholly abandoned God's Songs, are confessing that they need them back again.

The second word is, Co-operate. This Conference has done much, Mr. Chairman, to bind us together. We were drawn here by cords of mutual growth, but those cords have been mutually strengthened by our coming together. Represented in this Conference there have been, possibly, ten different denominations, and you see how admirably we have got along together. We are bound by one great common desire, namely, to maintain and promote the recognized authority of Jesus Christ to prescribe His own worship. Let this co-operation go forward; let us forget—not forget wholly, possibly—but let us forget in part some of our differences, and let us have more about the great common bonds that unite us. It is possible for one to hold a penny so near to his eye that he would hide the very shining of the sun in heaven from it; and so it is possible for a man so to magnify his knowledge of diverse points to his fellow-man as to forget the great bonds that bind him to his fellow-man. Let us not commit that error. On the other hand, let us unite in the things which we hold in common. I do not believe in a man giving up his convictions of the truth. I do not believe that the unity which we all long for will ever be reached in any other way than by every child of God following out the light as God gives him to see it. Let us not forget that we have very much in common. Let us co-operate.

The third word is, Supplicate. Let us supplicate. The battle is not ours, but God's. We must recognize that fact, and our appeal must constantly be unto Him Whose arm is omnipotent; and our hope of conquest must constantly rest on the great absolute fact that we are with God in this matter. Supplicate! Oh, if this Conference shall be followed up by a great revival of supplication unto Him in Whose hands are the hearts of all men, if He will so move upon men's hearts as to lead them to recognize His own reserved right to rule, then it will be a great blessing, indeed, unto men, and great glory unto God.

Well, going from this, brethren, we are to have another International Conference, and not only one, my hope is, but many other International Conferences. Mr. Chairman, our next, we trust, will be on the other side of the Atlantic; and

I would take the occasion now presented of inviting you all most cordially to attend the Conference, which we hope to hold, within the next two years, some place within the confines of the United States. I would, Mr. Chairman, that we could just export from these shores this splendid edifice, and bring to the Psalm-singers of the New World the inspiration of your presence and counsel, together with your co-operation in thought and prayers. Our ultimate object is—while, as Dr. Milligan states, the immediate purpose before some may be the introduction of the Psalms into denominations that do not now use them, yet I know he heartily agrees with me when I say that our ultimate object is—to have this book of God's making the only recognized Book of Praise throughout all the Churches redeemed by the precious blood of our Lord Jesus. To this end let us labour; for this consummation let us hope and pray. Again thanking you, I bid you, Mr. Chairman, and all those who so kindly and courteously treated us, Farewell.

PRAISE—Psalm 126.

Rev. Joseph Corkey, LL.D., Glendermot, Londonderry, Ireland, led in Prayer.

PRAISE—Psalm 133. BENEDICTION.

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